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SITTINGS of the American Congress are not usually of great interest to Europe. But the debates in the House of Representatives and the Senate this week can hardly fail to excite us, for they are concerned with our debts. It is natural that Americans should be incensed at what seems to them the wanton throwing away of so many millions of dollars, and nobody expects them to toss bouquets at their unpopular President. But the United States is part of the world, and the world is subject to economic forces of which politicians at Washington and Middle-West farmers appear to have a very dim appreciation. Congress will no doubt ratify the present moratorium, but will set its face, it is said, against any renewal next year. And as for cancellation—why should America sacrifice herself to opulent Britons, tricky Frenchmen and greedy international financiers? Why, indeed, except that the "sacrifice" might pay America. For America's own position is parlous; her banks are in a pickle, she has at least ten million unemployed, her exports this year are down by $1,328,000,000. And all this is in large part the effect of the system of war debts and reparations which is strangling the world.

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The Committee at Basle has now finished its preliminary study of Germany's ability to pay. It has received conclusive evidence of what everyone knew already—the severe contraction of the sources of revenue earmarked for the payment of the Young annuities, the existence of a considerably larger mass of short-term debts than was suspected in the summer, and the inability of Germany to meet either her public or her private obligations under present conditions except out of fresh loans. No one knows yet whether the Committee will content itself with a mere statement of these incontrovertible facts, and then pass the problem on to the politicians for solution, or will itself put forward proposals. As Germany cannot pay, there are in effect only two possibilities—a further moratorium, accompanied by a new "standstill" agreement for commercial debts, or a drastic reconsideration of the whole position of war debts and reparations, and probably of private debts as well. The second is what ought to be done; but that depends on America and France, and neither of them as yet seems eager to agree to it. So it will probably have to be another moratorium, in order to give the world more time to come to its senses. But it must be realised that moratoria and "standstill" agreements are not only no cure, but actually leave the situation worse than it was when they run out. There is, of course, the third alternative of simple default and repudiation.

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Marshal Chiang Kai-shek has resigned from his office as President of the Chinese Republic and from his posts in the Government and as Commander-in-Chief. This was not unexpected; the pressure of the

Canton group, and his Left wing opponents in the Kuomintang, had grown steadily stronger. And the widespread indignation over the Manchurian affair made the demand for scapegoats irresistible. The students' agitation culminated on Tuesday in riotous attacks on the Foreign Office at Nanking and attempts to mob Ministers and officials. Police and troops had their work cut out to quell the disturbance. Mr. Soong, the Minister of Finance, may also be forced to resign, and others may follow. This overthrow of a regime which seemed the nearest thing to a stable element in China is ominous. Chiang Kai-shek, of course, is not finished with — no Chinese general ever is, until his head is off. A revulsion of feeling may presently bring him back, or he may attempt to recover his position by fighting. About that we can make no predictions. Nor do we know how the reconstructed Government at Nanking will shape. But it looks as if China is in for another period of disorder, from which no one will get any advantage, except possibly the Japanese.

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The League has failed. Japanese and Chinese troops will be shooting each other for some time to come and there seems nothing we can do about it. There is, however, one small measure which we should like to see carried out by this country. It is a sinister comment on the sincerity of the signatories of the Kellogg Pact and the Covenant of the League that they continue to export armaments to belligerent countries. At the present moment, the Chinese are fighting the Japanese with arms which Japan has supplied to them in recent years, just as the Turks shot down the Australians in the Dardanelles with armaments supplied from Great Britain. There has been a steady flow of armaments to both China and Japan from Norway, from Hamburg (the port from which Czechoslovakian arms are shipped), from the United States and from other countries, including Great Britain.

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If we were to refuse to export armaments, our example might very well be followed by other countries, at least by the United States. Armaments can only be exported from this country with a licence given by the Board of Trade, and the Board, as a question in the House revealed the other day, always receives permission of the Foreign Office before granting a licence. Our armament exports, therefore, are part of our foreign policy. The hesitation of the League of Nations Union to press the Government—which ought to need no pressing—on this subject, seems inexplicable on any reputable ground. Two arguments have been advanced for continuing to supply arms to belligerent countries. The first—seriously advanced by high-minded persons who are supposed to be internationalists—is that our export of arms is small. How that changes the principle we cannot see. The second is, that if we do not send arms other people will—a plea which is not usually accepted as a justification for wrong-doing. This country cannot make other countries keep their hands clean, but—speaking, at least, for those of us who have no shares in armaments—we would prefer that Great Britain had no further share in shedding this blood.

A sharp division at the Burma Round Table was healed this week by statements from Lord Peel and Lord Lothian, who gave assurances on behalf of the Cabinet that the principle of responsible self-government with the necessary safeguards was intended to apply to a separated Burma no less than to India. Three delegates of the Burma home-rule party had been upset by Lord Peel's earlier statement and had adopted the one line of action which at a conference is always foolish. They had walked out. In explaining this procedure, the spokesman of the group made one remarkable disclosure. He said that before their departure for England they had conferred with representatives of the Buddhist priesthood and had agreed that, if called upon to accept anything less than full autonomy, they would return to Burma for further instructions. The debates at the Round Table have revealed a general agreement on major issues among the Burmese delegates and some interesting points of contrast with India. There is, for instance, a demand for a wholly Burman army, accompanied by an offer of compulsory service. There is an insistence upon full political equality for women, in recognition of the social equality which the Burmese women have enjoyed. And there is the familiar controversy over communal claims. Burma is anything but a homogeneous region.

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For the moment the rebellious Cypriots seem to be thoroughly quelled, but only for the moment. Our own internal crisis has led us to neglect an issue, which at ordinary times would have aroused a first-class controversy. But the *Times* has now dealt with the Cypriot case in a couple of articles from their special correspondent. For sheer effrontery these articles would be hard to equal. It is admitted that the Cypriots have been permitted to live like Greeks, think like Greeks, be educated in the Greek language and brought up on Greek history, and that in fact most of them are, to all intents and purposes, Greeks themselves. Hence, the argument runs, their "disloyalty" to the British Empire, in which they were not finally incorporated until 1925. Finally, Mr. Gladstone is blamed for their unwillingness to accept British rule. For was it not Mr. Gladstone who gave back the Ionian Islands to Greece "for the mere asking"? As a result the Cypriots were encouraged to think that, having behaved decently in another case, we might do the same in theirs. One wonders if there is any good reason why they too should not be allowed to rejoin the country to which they are emotionally and traditionally attached. Is the real reason that we govern them better than they would be governed otherwise, even though against their will? Or has the promise that we gave to France that we would not surrender Cyprus to the Greeks without her consent—for strategic reasons—anything to do with it? Or is it just a matter of prestige?

* * *

With Japan off the gold standard, France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and the United States are the only countries that remain upon it in any real sense. Others which keep to it nominally have been compelled so to restrict the movement of money as to have only a courtesy title to be considered as gold standard countries at all. As more countries go off gold, the bonus to

our export trade which came from our abandonment of the gold standard is diminished. Apart from this, our trade, like other peoples', is suffering not only from the rising level of tariffs all over the world, but also from the effects of restrictions on exchange in making it difficult to get paid for goods actually sold. The gold standard countries doubtless stand to suffer more; and trade, as far as it survives at all, tends to be diverted from its customary channels to interchange between countries which are no longer on the gold standard. But this is poor consolation for any of us, and certainly no way of making world depression less intense. It is no help to our trade, but a further source of loss, when France or America suffers. And yet any attempt to tackle the world's monetary problems on international lines seems not to be coming nearer, but to be getting more remote.

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It has been left for the millers to inform the public what the Government's proposals for a wheat quota actually are. Apparently a Dominions quota of 55 per cent. is proposed, in addition to the home quota of 15 per cent. We see that Mr. Bennett quotes 70 per cent. for the Dominions plus 15 per cent. for the home crop, but we find it impossible to believe that the Government can contemplate leaving only 15 per cent. for all foreign producers. For the home quota, despite repeated statements to the opposite effect, there is to be a guaranteed price, or rather a scale of prices varying with quality from 40s. to 45s. a quarter. Dominions wheat, it is said, is to be imported at the world price; but how this is to be reconciled with the quota system does not yet appear. In the case of home-grown wheat, if the figures given are correct, the guaranteed price will be about half as much again as the present price; and this difference is likely to be passed on to the consumer in higher bread prices. The millers have not been won over from their hostility to the Government scheme, and are putting forward an alternative plan of their own, the nature of which has not yet been disclosed. The other associations in the corn trade seem to be prepared to work the Government scheme as it stands. For our part, we view the entire plan for a Dominions quota with suspicion, though final judgment must be suspended until the details are known. To a home quota the objections are less strong, but remain considerable if there is to be a guaranteed price largely above the world price.

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Again this week there comes news of wage-reductions, this time in the shipping service, despite the fall in the value of the pound. In the cotton industry, the master spinners, acting without the manufacturers' collaboration, have presented their demand for lower wage-rates and longer working hours, and the operatives have met them with a blunt refusal to discuss any claim involving a longer working week. Japan's abandonment of the gold standard foreshadows intensified competition in Far Eastern markets and therefore makes the cotton employers even more anxious than before to find means of cutting down production costs. The Trade Unions obviously cannot accept a return to a longer working week, in flat opposition to the Washington Convention and the entire hours policy of recent years. If the forty-eight hours week is successfully attacked in one industry or country it will be challenged at once in many others. There is, however, reason to hope that the Lancashire employers will not push their demands to the point of a lock-out, at any rate without an attempt to reopen negotiations in a less objectionable basis. Everyone admits the need for reducing Lancashire's costs; but there are right and wrong ways of setting about it, and the main source of the trouble is not high wages, but bad industrial and financial organisation.

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The sensation of the week is the suspension of work on the Cunard Company's projected 73,000-ton liner—the "hunger ship," as she is not inappropriately called on the Clyde. The reason is understood to be a shortage of liquid capital, a consequence presumably of the stranglehold upon trade which to-day everywhere obtains. Three thousand men have been directly thrown out of employment, to say nothing of the thousands concerned in the provision of fittings and equipment for the boat; while, if work on the vessel is not resumed, a million pounds or so will have been more or less thrown away. Whether the project of this "super-liner" was well conceived in the first place is open to discussion; there are only two docks that will accommodate her and in lean times she could not be worked at a profit. But that the project, once embarked on, should be dropped, is extremely unfortunate. The abandoned liner stands as a spectacular symbol of Britain's threatened prestige, industrial and maritime; as well as an object lesson in the repercussions upon industry of a policy of fiscal and budgetary restriction. It is possible, however, that the decision not to build will be reconsidered; both inside and outside Parliament there are influential forces operating to that end.

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The international suicide race continues. Having all decided to keep out each other's goods and to cut down our purchasing power, the producers of raw materials are everywhere reduced to destroying by one dodge or another the wealth the hungry people of the world are not permitted to enjoy. Several recent instances of restriction of output should be welcomed by all orthodox economists. Rubber trees insist on producing rubber in spite of the world slump, and rubber, untapped by its owners, may be tapped by natives and offered for sale at distressingly low cost. At least one famous rubber company is now reported to have found a solution for this unfortunate natural abundance. An effective rubber pest has been found and is now, we are told, to be pumped into the plantations. Similarly with regard to the surfeit of cotton. It has been seriously suggested that the planters should drop their campaign against the boll-weevil which has suddenly ceased to be a pest and become "the growers' friend." An alternative method to destroying crops is to find a new use for them. The Brazilian Government is reported to have got tired of burning bags of coffee in a remote valley and is now trying to pulverise the coffee into briquettes, which are to be used as fuel for the State railway engines. If this economic fantasia is played much longer it will not be coffee only, but the whole economic system, that will go up in smoke!

A CHRISTMAS SURVEY

THE Cabinet has been hard at work this week—surveying the international situation, we are told. It is not a very jolly occupation for the Christmas holidays; for the outlook abroad is about as bad as it could be. The formidable problems confronting us are being, or are shortly going to be, discussed as they have been discussed before by politicians and experts—at Basle and Berlin and Geneva, in India, at Washington and, of course, in that place, wherever it is, where Lord Beaverbrook and his friends devise economic miracles. But few of us expect happy solutions from any of those quarters. Our own "National Government" has not fulfilled the extravagant hopes that were pinned on it a couple of months ago. It is not much use, however, to gird at it; neither it nor any other Government could by itself provide a remedy for the disease which is afflicting the whole capitalist world. Downing Street and Westminster may, indeed, make things a little worse, but, without the assistance of Paris and Washington and New York, they cannot—*pace* Lord Beaverbrook—make them any better. The depression is world wide, its symptoms are pretty much the same here, there and everywhere—unemployment, hunger, dislocated currencies, stifled trade, a mountain of taxation. The root cause of it all is the insensate nationalism which clings with such tenacity to its reparations and war-debt payments, its armaments and its tariff barriers. And the remedy can only be found through international co-operation.

The events of the past year should have made the necessity of such co-operation patent to everyone. In this country at least, whatever our follies and blunders have been, most people are alive to the situation. It is true we have monomaniacs who are obsessed with the idea of getting back to the gold standard or of building the Utopia that they call Empire Free Trade—not to mention the optimists who foresee a general and unaided revival by Easter or by Whitsuntide. Yet even these know better than they talk, and would not oppose a concerted attempt to stop the rot. And other countries which are dependent on the policies of the dominant Powers—the Scandinavians and the Dominions who are tied to sterling, the South American Republics, the Central European victors and victims of the war and the peace—all these are eager for the dominant Powers to make an honest and bold attempt to tackle the problem. The key to the solution lies in the hands of two of those Powers—the United States and France—and their conversion to common sense is unhappily a slow process. At this moment the American Government and Congress are wrangling over their European debt claims. The Hoover moratorium has not yet been ratified; the House of Representatives is making trouble, and the Senate may make more. They will presently, we suppose, do what is required of them.

In the meantime, America's debtors, including ourselves, are in technical default, for we should have paid our interest on December 15th. In all the circumstances this does not matter; no one expected us to pay, and Mr. Mellon, the Secretary to the Treasury, made himself counsel for the defence, so to speak. He represented to Congress the intolerable position that Great Britain was in owing to the depreciation of the pound. We receive our payments from Europe in sterling, we make our payments to America in dollars, and the result of that under present conditions is to add nearly 50 per cent. to our burden. It is not surprising that some Americans and all Englishmen have recalled the terms of the Balfour Note of 1922. The Balfour Note declared that we should ask no more from our debtors than was necessary to pay our creditors. But it added significantly that "while we do not ask for more, all will admit that we can hardly be content with less." Will the United States then agree to a reduction of our burden? Or shall we be expected to get more from Germany? The first alternative is possible, though Congress said "No" to it the other day. The second alternative is impossible. Indeed, not only can Germany not be made to pay a greater amount in reparations; it is pretty evident that when the Hoover moratorium expires next summer she will not be in a position to pay anything at all.

That is the position which both America and France have got to face, and which neither of them seems prepared to face squarely. The Americans—or at least the majority of them—still believe that they can extract blood from the European stone, and maintain that debts and reparations are unconnected. The French still think, or pretend, that the German stone can be made to yield blood—for France at any rate, if not for others—but they do not suggest that debts and reparations are unconnected. They would scale down reparations *pari passu* with a scaling down of debts, though they are loath to relax their grip on Germany, and they would, we fear, demur strongly if America asked for a substantial reduction of armaments in return for a cancellation of debts.

What hope is there of finding a way out of this mad tangle of claims and counterclaims, of fear and jealousy and pride? The main hope lies in the pressure of facts—hard, ugly, economic facts—on both France and America. The collection of gold, as each of them has seen, is a policy that brings disaster. Tariffs offer no salvation. Export trade is in serious decline in both countries. The unemployment figures in the United States are stupendous, and they are mounting rapidly in France. And Germany is squeezed very nearly dry. Nobody can be sure that she will even meet her commercial obligations when the "standstill" agreement expires at the end of February. If she does not, the Americans stand to lose many billions of dollars. All these things are realities. It is idle to go on talking of justice, generosity, the sacredness of contracts and treaties, and the rest; plain self-interest should drive France and America alike out of their nationalistic fool's-paradises.

Next month another international conference will assemble to deal with reparations and debts. It will have had the ground partly prepared for it by the committee now sitting at Basle; but if it confines itself to haggling over details of the Young Plan, if the Americans are going into it in the spirit shown at Washington this week, and the French in the spirit of the Bourbons, then its results will be about as much use to the world as a sick-headache. The whole

economic order is in jeopardy. The capitalist system has been strained nearly to breaking point, and it will stand very little more. The collapse of Germany, with all the consequences that that would involve, would not signalise the end of capitalism and its immediate replacement by Socialism. It would more likely bring chaos—and then only a chance of Socialism after an indefinite period of misery and struggle. That is not a cheerful prospect, except perhaps to the Communist Party. But it is one of the prospects which, we hope, Mr. MacDonald's Cabinet has envisaged in its Christmas survey. And it is for them, and for the rest of the politicians and industrialists and financiers of Europe and America to make their choice between chaos and construction. Construction should in the long run mean Socialism; but with that we are not concerned at the moment. Here and now it means concerted measures for getting the millstones of reparations and war debts from off our necks, the reduction of armaments, the ordering of our currencies, and the re-establishing of international trade. If the delegates to the conference are not prepared to strive for such a policy, they might as well stay at home and wait for the crash to come.

BRÜNING AND HITLER

[From a Correspondent Recently in Germany]

THE political history of Germany in the last few weeks could almost have been followed by glancing at the headlines in the German press. "A Brüning-Hitler Combination," which was the news in the last weeks of October, was replaced a fortnight later by a confident declaration of "Brüning without Hitler"; and this in its turn was superseded in the middle of November by a "Hitler without Brüning" announcement.

The sensational success achieved by the Nazis at the Hesse elections seemed to have convinced Hitler that his hour had struck. He began to behave almost as though he was the coming Dictator of Germany. He announced that power would fall into his hands in a few weeks' time; and he went so far as to outline his foreign as well as his domestic policy, giving interviews to accredited foreign journalists and sending emissaries to test feeling in the various European capitals.

Hitler's arrival as the destined Saviour of Society synchronised indeed with a seeming recognition by Germans that the reputation for political sagacity which Dr. Brüning has so long enjoyed had scarcely been earned. The abandonment of the Austro-German Customs agreement, the unfortunate handling of the banking crisis, the inability to compensate the workers for cuts in wages by a corresponding reduction of prices, and the fact that, despite all Dr. Brüning's journeys and labour, his country was still saddled with the Young Plan—to all this record of fiasco the failure of the Economic Advisory Council seemed to contribute the final story. Dr. Brüning's political stock had indeed sunk very low; and Hitler's, in comparison, had began to appreciate. "Hitler without Brüning" seemed almost a possibility.

Unfortunately for Hitler his electoral success at Hesse was followed by the discovery of the Nazi conspiracy for bringing about a *putsch* in that State. And this disclosure, which gave the lie to his repeated declarations in favour of "legal methods," convinced the public that the triumph of the National Socialist Party would involve Germany in an unmitigated reign of terrorism, and at once created a situation in which the "Hitler without Brüning" programme was doomed. In fact, the revelation of the projected *Putsch* had done as much to alienate moderate opinion from the Hitlerite movement as the murder of the Communist Deputy at Hamburg last summer.

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The economic struggle, in Germany as in some other countries, seems to have entered a new stage, that in which the industrialists are assuming the offensive, while the workers are definitely on the defensive, fighting a sort of rearguard battle. The economic depression and Germany's 5,000,000 unemployed form a favourable background for such an offensive; for the workers are no longer in a position to assert themselves. Their only weapon, the strike, has been wrested from them; for the Unions' funds are almost exhausted and it is obviously impossible for strikers to hold out long when one-third of the workers are looking out for jobs. Moreover, these economic factors are reinforced in favour of the industrialists by the backing they can obtain from a great political party, the National Socialists, a backing the more welcome since this party, the full name of which is the German National Socialist Labour Party, claims to be the champion of the workers' interests.

Nothing, however, could demonstrate more flagrantly the unreality of this claim than the Nazi association with the industrialists and the use which the industrialists are prepared to make of it. Some members of the Nazi party are now trying to rescue the movement from this association. But such a separation is not likely to materialise, and the efforts to bring it about look more like an internal quarrel than a divergence of principle. The Hitlerites have eaten out of the hands of the industrialists for several years; they can hardly now repudiate their old paymasters. Hugenberg would certainly not allow them to do so: already he threatens to split on them if they break away. But why should they break away? As a matter of fact there is little difference in principle between the Nazis proper and their capitalist associates, whom Dr. Brüning calls the representatives of the "Social Reaction."

The fact seems to be that while many of Hitler's adherents come from the destitute classes, and are therefore the more readily susceptible to the appeal of revolutionary propaganda, the leaders and officials who are responsible for this propaganda are quite deliberately indulging in political mimicry. There is another difference, of course, in the fact that the two men are rival leaders. Hitler is obviously jealous of Hugenberg's ascendancy in the ranks of the "National Opposition" and has made it studiously plain that the leadership of his own party is not vacant and that that party is not a mere branch of the "N.O."

This jealousy has been skilfully worked upon by Dr. Brüning, who has recently held up before Hitler the possibility of sharing in the Government on the condition that the Nazi leader abandons his military parades and sham manœuvres and cuts himself off from his reactionary allies. For a time this possibility of a Hitler-Brüning combination was a familiar topic in the press of both parties, and the general public in Germany was on the tip-toe of expectation. But it soon became apparent that the Chancellor's *ballon d'essai* had not been intended too seriously. The leaders of the Centre formally declared their opposition to the making of any political experiments, more especially at a time when Germany had to face the outside world; while the Nazis disclaimed the idea of responding to any overtures from a Government which they had every expectation of overthrowing.

What this expectation is worth it is not easy to say. The political tide certainly seems to be flowing strongly in favour of the Nazis. But when one realises the distance they have to cover before they can obtain a majority in the Reichstag, one begins to regard their expectations as ridiculously over-sanguine. Even in the smaller Federal States, where their electoral successes have been sensational, they have not succeeded in obtaining a majority in a single

case. The figures of the latest election to these bodies are very instructive; for, while they reveal great changes as between parties, they reflect little alteration in the division between the working class vote (counting Social-Democrat and Communists votes together) and that for the capitalists. The main gains of the Nazis have, in fact, been made at the expense of the bourgeois parties; while the losses of the Social-Democrats are due to the increase of the Communist vote. These elections leave the political situation more or less as it was and show "no change."

While, then, the recent successes won by the Hitlerites are far from warranting any expectation of a conquest of power, they have proved considerable enough to create a still further intensification of the unrest prevailing in Germany. Hitler's idea seems to be to get on the nerves of his countrymen and to paralyse the will of the governing classes by giving a sort of dress-rehearsal of the coming "frightfulness."

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The attitude of the Social Democrats, the largest party in the Reichstag, is the most puzzling feature of the political situation. They threatened to withdraw their support from Dr. Brüning unless he sought the first opportunity of taking up Hitler's challenge. This is a rather startling *volte-face;* for hitherto their complaisance to the Chancellor has rendered them not only suspect but politically impotent. German Communists, of course, explain this complaisance as a more or less conscious betrayal of the workers' cause. But this explanation is too crude to merit acceptance. The former subservience of the Social Democrats to the Government was a case not of political suicide but of political self-preservation. The only explanation of their long toleration of the Brüning-Hindenburg duumvirate must have been their consciousness that any attempt to assert themselves could only lead to a dissolution of the Reichstag and to the transformation of the present veiled dictatorship into an open one. This seems to be the crux of the German political situation, which continues not because the Reichstag tolerates Dr. Brüning, but because Dr. Brüning tolerates the Reichstag.

That well-known Socialist leader, Dr. Löbe, has just warned his party that it would be folly to demand the convocation of the Reichstag (of which, by the way, the Doctor is President) and to vote against the Emergency Decree, since such action would inevitably result in an abrogation of the Parliamentary system and the establishment of an open Dictatorship. In spite, however, of these electoral defeats, the Social Democrats are now in a much stronger position tactically than they have occupied for some time. They can now, in fact, demand a price for their toleration of the Government. The more unsavoury the reputation of the Nazis and the less fit they have proved themselves for partnership with the Zentrum, the more must Dr. Brüning rely on the goodwill and the support of Drs. Breitscheid and Löbe, who now openly declare that they will refuse their support unless the Government takes the sternest measures to defend the Republic.

The latest emergency decree promulgated by the President of the Reich may be accepted as Dr. Brüning's reply to the Nazi challenge and to the Social Democrats' demands.

Whether the decree's main economic aim can be secured, that of making Germany a "cheaper country," a country better able to compete on the world market, it is too early to say. Its political aim, that of putting Hitler and his programme of a self-contained Germany into the shade, has certainly been achieved. The decree is so drastic and comprehensive in its scope that it directly affects every man and woman in the country. It affects them in two ways. They are going to lose through direct cuts in wages, salaries and rates of interest and through increased taxation. And they are going to gain through reduction of prices, of rents, of transport and of various Government charges. But whether the gains will be greater or less than the losses no one can tell at this stage. All Germany is now busy trying to calculate the effects of the decree; and in this atmosphere of economic stringency and uncertainty mere political discussions are for the moment in abeyance. Dr. Brüning has very adroitly side-tracked Hitler. And the leader of the Nazis is for the moment, as his countrymen might say, a *Nebensache*, or as we should say, "a back number."

A LONDON DIARY

LOOKING back over the short session of Parliament that has just ended, I find that most people whose judgments I respect agree that the lopsided House of Commons is a good deal better than might have been expected from the manner of its birth. A Conservative M.P., whose experience goes back to the early years of the century, and who has always been a very Liberal Tory, gave me some interesting impressions of the new House from the Government side. He thought it "not at all a bad House" as Houses go. The new Members are very different from the hard-faced men who packed the Tory benches after the coupon election of 1918. They are much less protectionist and imperialist than might have been expected. They listened to Mr. Churchill and the extreme protectionists, but were little influenced by them. He thought that the bulk of the Members were sufficiently moderate to give the existing Government a good chance of holding together on a moderate programme, but that much will depend upon Mr. MacDonald. One noticeable thing about the present House is that it contains a large number of young men, and it is too early as yet to judge their quality. There have been one or two good maiden speeches, but no one has shown any marked ability. There is here a tremendous opportunity, for the older young men of the Tory Party have been very disappointing.

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My informant may be right. But I have also heard the opposite view put forward strongly by another well-known Conservative of the progressive school. It was all very well, he said, to keep the Page-Crofters in check for a few "crisis" weeks. But he expected a really big protectionist split the moment there was a lull. The question was whether there was going to be a lull or a world smash in February. I think Mr. MacDonald must also be feeling very doubtful about his future. That seems the probable explanation of a remarkable document—composed, I gather, as the basis of a pamphlet—which is enjoying a very limited and confidential circulation. I gather that it is there represented that Mr. MacDonald is still as much a Labour man as ever, that he is determined to return to (or perhaps reconstruct?) the fold under his own leadership before very long. It is argued that Mr. MacDonald only retired as a good strategist in face of overwhelming odds, and that it was not his fault that his Socialist army refused to retreat with him in good order. Soon he hopes to lead it forward again, and by way of proof it is pointed out that he has so far not attempted to build up a separate National Labour organisation for himself. The comment I heard was that Mr. MacDonald had promised, when he first formed a "National Government" that he would never, in any circumstances, lead a Tory host to an election or after it, and that—well, putting it politely, once bitten, twice shy.

* * *

The murder of C. G. B. Stevens, the district Magistrate of Tippera, in Bengal, is a horrible and senseless tragedy. He was an unusual man, a Civil servant who mixed happily with Indians. When the Indianisation of the Civil Service became rapid some years ago he wrote to a friend in England that things would be difficult, though he was determined to carry on in the belief that he still had a

useful part to play. So successful was he, in fact, that a distinguished Indian Nationalist not long ago singled him out as an ideal example of the kind of Englishman who would always be valuable in the Indian service. He had an amusing record at Cambridge. He was a great climber and a good musician. It was Stevens who hung a chamber-pot upside down on an inaccessible turret of Emmanuel College. It had to remain there to the scandal of the Emmanuel authorities and the enjoyment of everyone else until Stevens himself took it down two days later. He used to play the organ in College Chapel. One day he ended the service with a voluntary, very slowly and majestically played, from Gilbert and Sullivan. The quite unmusical Dean noticed nothing, but when he was informed that "I'm Going to Marry Yum-Yum, Yum-Yum" had been played in Chapel, severely reprimanded Stevens, who promised in future to play no secular music. The following Sunday the Dean was outraged by an extraordinarily jaunty air. Called to account, Stevens innocently explained that it was from Bach's St. Matthew Passion! It all depended on how you played it.

* * *

The murder of Mr. Stevens will only strengthen the determination of the Government of India to implement the new Coercion Ordinances. Mr. Gandhi has spoken as if he intends to make the repeal of these Ordinances a *sine qua non* of his continued co-operation. But I am told that his views on this are not shared by a good many Indians in Bengal who think that the Terrorist system must be dealt with and that the Terrorists themselves are only getting what they asked for. It is clear that the assassinations cannot be allowed to continue without danger to the whole fabric of government, for they have already been the direct cause of some ominous and unpleasant incidents. On the other hand, it is to be hoped that the Government will not delay setting up the Committees to continue the work of the Round Table Conference. There are some strange rumours about with regard to the British delegation to India and the strangest idea of all—that Mr. MacDonald himself should go—is being revived. It is much more likely, I think, that Lord Lothian will be the head of the delegation.

* * *

Backward children are the bane of elementary schools. They swell the already monstrously overcrowded classes, learning little themselves and acting as clogs on their brighter (or more easily interested) class-mates. Some of them never learn properly even to read and write. But they are not by any means all fools; it is only that nothing in the normal curriculum stirs them to mental activity. "Talkies" will, in future, be their tonic. I draw this cheerful news from the account, published this week, of an experiment which was carried out by the National Union of Teachers and various local authorities in fifteen Middlesex schools. Sixteen films were shown, in groups, to over 3,500 children and the results, including the opinions of the teachers, carefully digested. The films were a job lot, ranging from *The Development of the Frog* to John Masefield reading his *West Wind*, and from *Scenes at the Naval Conference* to *A Visit to the Coal-face*. The conclusions, moderately and sensibly stated, make an overwhelming argument in favour of producing, under expert supervision, "talkies" exclusively for education.

* * *

Children of whom the teachers had despaired were roused to quite respectable feats of brain-work and reduced, remarkably, the normal gap between themselves and the quicker-witted. Screen and sound equipment did for them what blackboard and voice had failed to do. The evidence of the teachers is emphatic on this point. The Report shows that even the smartest pupils really do learn from films and are not merely, as sceptics might think, relieved from the disagreeable necessity of concentrating. What is more, the lessons learnt were clearly remembered after a longish interval. The case seems to me proven and the next move to lie with those who can provide cheap apparatus and competent pictures. Three Government departments are concerned in France with the distribution of films to schools and projectors are subsidised by the State. I do not know what standard they reach. But we in England have now made the first systematic inquiry and I hope we shall soon turn the evidence so excellently presented to practical account.

* * *

The Buy British campaign continues to have its comic side. Some shops display the label, "Foreign, *but* Good Quality!" One wealthy Canadian woman went the other day in a fervour of imperial patriotism to a West End house that had advertised a sale of silks. She bought lavishly, and then asked, "But these are not British?" "Oh, no," was the reply; "we have to sell them off to make way for the British stock. They are French, but the foreigners can't get much out of them—can they?—when we let them go at these prices!"

* * *

I read in the *Manchester Guardian* of last Saturday morning that

> Mr. MacDonald is going off on a private trip to no one is allowed to know where over the week-end, but he will be back at No. 10 on Sunday night.

But in the afternoon of the same day I read in the *Evening Standard* that

> The Prime Minister, who is on a visit to Lord and Lady Londonderry at Ranksborough, near Oakham (Rutland), to-day attended the meet of the Cottesmore Hounds.

One wonders which fact had to be concealed from the *Manchester Guardian*—that the Prime Minister was going to spend the week-end with a member of his own Cabinet, or that he was going to attend a meet of the Cottesmore Hounds? Or was it both?

CRITIC.

TO ALMOST ANY FARMER

THE change in the agricultural position is startling. While we were on the gold standard the depression of wheat, oats and barley seemed assured, at any rate for some years ahead. In the absence of any probability of tariffs it was clear that the American and the Dane between them could check any revival of the British trade in bacon, while the Argentine chilled beef and the New Zealand and Australian mutton would leave all the profits of the meat business to the skilled wholesale and retail traders.

To-day, you are face to face with a new position. You are not called upon to wait for several years to establish your business through the medium of the National Mark. You are going to get your quota and a modest guarantee for wheat, and though there may even now be no direct tax upon food you will at least enjoy an opportunity of entering into more reasonable competition with the foreign producer. When the chance comes, what will you do with it?

The profitable production of wheat at 40s. a quarter demands skilled handling of the land and the use of modern machinery. Modern machinery calls for skilled workmen and you cannot hire or keep them indefinitely at a wage round about 30s. a week. The men who were content with this reward for life work are passing; their sons who are growing up are making every effort to leave the farms. I hear you complain that the modern farmhand is not nearly so good a man as his father, who, worn out in your service some twenty years or more ago, passed on to the workhouse to die. He worked ten or twelve hours a day, never knew anything better than 15s. a week with a harvest bonus of £5 or £6, and yet contrived to take a great pride in his job. His children find life at 30s. a week too hard

to be enjoyable, even with the aid of a half-holiday and the modern amenities of village clubs, wireless and motor omnibuses. The fact must be faced, however disconcerting.

Should prosperity come back to the land through the troubles of the pound and some modification of our fiscal system, are you prepared to realise that labour must have its share? Sir Daniel Hall, speaking of the general complaint that the agricultural labourer is becoming slack and is not worth his wages, remarked not so long ago that he never would be worth his wages until they were doubled. But Sir Daniel has a most unpleasant habit of saying what is in his mind, and as everything that gets there is founded upon wide knowledge and varied experience, his utterances can hardly avoid offence. I cannot help thinking that if you are to take advantage of the new conditions you must seek to carry your workers with you, and to do that you will have to raise both the standards of your work and its rewards.

There is another point that seems worth emphasising. You must co-operate. I don't know if you ever found secretiveness really profitable—in twenty years of active farming I never did—but in any case it has to stop. Unless you work through your own society and are loyal to it, the middlemen will beat you under the new and better conditions, now due, as they have beaten you under the old ones. At present you haven't the foggiest idea of what loyalty to a society implies. I have seen the most promising ventures collapse, not once but many times, because those who stood to lose by your unity tempted you with a bribe that might be no better than a fraction of one penny per lb. in the case of meat or threepence a score in the case of eggs. Even when you have been faithful to a co-operative society you have frequently endeavoured to use it as a medium for getting rid of produce that you should never have offered. To be frank at the risk of giving offence, let me suggest that in approaching the co-operative ideal you have failed lamentably again and again, chiefly through your own lack of vision. Although the people against whom you must contend have combined for concerted action in the most open fashion, you have learned nothing from them.

You need to exercise far wider discretion in your choice of leaders and representatives. If you must have a Union and desire that it is to be of any use to you, you should at least see that no one who bears a responsible position in its councils should be associated, directly or indirectly, with the trusts and combines, whose success or failure depends on the leaders' powers of bargaining with you. No man who takes a part in the councils of the N.F.U. should be shareholders in bodies like the United Dairies, Limited, or any of the sugar-beet concerns or the Millers' Association. All these, and other bodies, are reputable enough and do their best for their members, but farmers, in their own interests, must combine against combines, and if they combine through the N.F.U., they must see to it that nobody who represents them has a foot in two camps. Finally, you have to recognise that the age of mechanisation is upon you.

A few months ago Dr. J. B. Orr, who stands among the most distinguished of modern agricultural authorities, said to the writer; "The horse and plough teams are as obsolete to-day as the bow and arrow." Only a week or so ago I stood on some uplands in Hampshire and watched a caterpillar tractor drawing a four furrow plough over rather sticky stubbles. The driver, who kept an admirable line, was ploughing seven acres a day in November. I asked him if he had had much experience of horse ploughing, and whether he could have done much more than three-quarters of an acre in a day with a pair-horse team. He replied that he thought three-quarters would have been "about the mark."

You have realised that efficient machinery is the one and only check to the vagaries of our English climate. If, on an ample holding, you have four teams out when the days are fine, you are not covering half as much ground as a single caterpillar would leave in order. You will employ four men and at least eight horses in place of one man and a single machine. When harvest time comes, a single fine day, if you have the full mechanical equipment, should be worth a week of fine weather on fields where the older fashion prevails. You may well say that you lack the means and you may even find that your fields do not lend themselves to the new method, but it is possible to cut down hedges and fill in ditches. If there is a sufficient demand for mechanisation, machinery will be readily available on the hire system, and will pay for itself as it goes along. There is no reason why any farmer employing modern machinery should give less than £2 a week to the men who handle it, and there are great possibilities, both for the farmer and his staff, in well-paid overtime work. I know of one farm on which mechanisation is up to date and the ploughmen volunteer to work into the night, carrying lamps on their tractors. Where the spirit and the method are what they might be, the weather loses its power to harm.

It may be said that mechanisation and rationalisation will reduce the number of landworkers. It is perfectly reasonable to believe, on the other hand, that it will increase them, because, at present, the possibilities of the land are hardly realised. I think that there are not more than three or four counties that are producing what may be regarded as their quota of food—that is to say, what they might produce if they were at the top of their form in the matter of cultivation.

I would suggest that the agriculturist has a chance that may not recur—a chance to produce a great and steadily increasing proportion of the nation's food. Against him will be arrayed the fullest endeavour of all foreign competitors and all the machinations of the trusts, combines and associations that exist to buy cheap and sell dear, if only to justify the well-remembered statement that "anybody can make money out of farm produce as soon as it has left the farmers' hands." If you do not take advantage of this unexpected opportunity, you will not only hurt yourself, you will fail the country in its hour of need. You, with a very minimum of State aid, can correct the nation's balance of trade and bring back a quarter of a million workers to the land.

S. L. B.

ON BEING EXTRAVAGANT

THERE are probably a score of good reasons for being extravagant. In the first place, extravagance is the opposite of miserliness, and is therefore the opposite of a vice. In the second place, it is highly enjoyable because, while one is being extravagant, one has the impression that one is giving other people the impression that one is richer, and consequently more enviable, than one is. In the third place, it is good for trade—at least, for the hotel trade, the *pâté de foie gras* trade, the champagne trade, the fur trade, the dressmaking trade, and the trade in first editions of books. In the fourth place, by dissipating large fortunes, it is the mark of an aspiration towards greater equality of income than at present exists. I cannot think of the other reasons at the moment, but anyone who has the time will easily be able to discover them for himself.

Many as are the arguments in favour of extravagance, however, I confess I seldom read an account of extravagance in the newspapers without a sense of shock. I like spending money, but I do not like the way other people spend money, when they spend too much of it. During the past week, for instance, a lady was reported in the law courts to have run deeply into debt though her husband made her an allowance of £2,400 a year. I do not say that in these hard times it is easy to live on £2,400 a year. I am not sure that it is easy to live on £100,000 a year. At the same time, it seems to me shocking that anyone who has £2,400 a year

to spend should run up a bill in Bond Street for nearly a thousand pounds' worth of furs and dresses and should be unable to pay it. The lady explained her difficulties. There was a household staff of five maids, a governess, three gardeners, a groom for the daughter's pony, and a chauffeur. Wages alone absorbed between £800 and £900 a year. Her husband, she admitted, paid the rent, rates and taxes, but, when he was at home from his business in India, she was compelled to pay the wine and cigar bills out of her allowance. In addition to this, she declared, he said to her, "You must have some decent clothes to go about with me," and, when she proposed to buy a fur coat that would cost £50, he said, "Oh, you could not get a good one for that. Get a good one while you are about it." It is clear that, from the wife's own point of view, she was a hard-pressed woman skimping and saving in order to make ends meet. Even so, a bill of £963 9s. 6d. for furs and dresses somehow shocks me. According to my standards, that is wastefulness.

Yet it is a type of wastefulness that must be fairly common if we may judge from the evidence that is given every time that a dressmaker's bill is mentioned in the law courts. It is as though dress-buying were a passion as difficult to conquer, or even to moderate, as smoking. A lady recently announced during a lawsuit that she often ordered twenty or thirty dresses at a time, and that some of them might never be worn by her even once. If dresses were works of art that gave pleasure to generation after generation of those who saw them, one could understand the craze for possession. But the ordinary dress is no more than a temporary aid to vanity like lip-stick, and a new dress lasts scarcely as long as a new novel by a pot-boiling author. Of all forms of self-indulgence, it seems to me, the purchase of clothes has the least to be said for it. The ordinary man who buys expensive food and wines and cigars buys them as a rule in order to share them with his friends. However ostentatious he may be, he can scarcely prevent other people from enjoying the fruits of his extravagance. A woman in a costly dress, however, is like a man who would invite you to his table and would have all the good things served to himself exclusively. Leaving you to help yourself to the common dishes, he would gorge himself on caviare, expecting you to admire its quality from a distance. He would let you know the date of his champagne but would offer you none; he would describe the aroma of his Napoleon brandy and would leave you to do your best with a glass of ordinary Three Star. You would be allowed to envy his cigar, but not to take one like it from the box.

This, I admit, is a gross misrepresentation of the well-dressed woman. She, too, surely does something for her fellow-creatures, charming the eye and reminding us how in the course of hundreds of thousands of years our race has escaped from the trees and nobly advanced into the drawing-room. She is an actress in the long drama of civilisation, helping us to live imaginatively as we sit at the same table with her. I do not myself observe what a woman is wearing, but I have no doubt I should notice it if she were wearing anything particularly repulsive. Hence even persons like myself who have little interest in clothes may be insensibly influenced and civilised by dresses that we scarcely see. Still a dress bill for £963 9s. 6d.! It shocks me. I cannot help it.

As for extravagance in general, I should be more wholeheartedly in favour of it if I could convince myself that it was always a form of generosity. There are few pleasanter experiences than to be in the company of a man who is throwing five-pound notes about, and that the majority of such men are generous I am certain. But it is also possible to be extravagant and at the same time to be as niggardly as a miser. There are thousands of people who are extravagant in their own pleasures, but who carefully calculate every shilling they spend on the pleasures of others. I once knew a man who would run into debt in order to eat and drink well, but who was in an obvious state of pain if circumstances forced him to buy food or drink for anyone else. A man may be utterly selfish and nevertheless live beyond his means. One would not take the trouble to mention so plain a fact if it were not that extravagance and generosity are so often confused. This is largely because most of us hate economy—that dreary infringement of human liberty, that mean affront to the natural magnanimity of man.

There would be little use in advocating extravagance to-day, however, even if it were the virtue that some people vaguely think it to be. Economy is spreading among us like a pestilence, and we are becoming so critical of every penny we spend that many of us are abandoning what once seemed the ordinary amenities of existence on the ground that, judged by present standards, they are luxuries. Thus Lord Parmoor resigns his membership of the Athenæum on the ground that a club is a luxury. I am not a clubman myself, but I cannot see any good reason for resigning from a club except that one is bored by it or that one cannot afford the subscription. Twenty-five shillings a month is no wild waste of money for a man of moderate means. How often does he spend as much on a single lunch? Even I, if I were a clubman, would feel guilty of no extravagance in continuing my subscription. Other people, again, are giving up their motor-cars on the ground that they are luxuries for the extravagant. But, if one's income runs to it, it is no more extravagant to possess a motor-car to-day than it was a year ago. It is possible that, by the time we have paid our income-tax, most of us will be in a position in which even a tram ride will seem an extravagance. But, if things are going to be as bad as that, we may as well go on leading more or less normal lives till the crash comes. I am all in favour of saving, but not of saving to excess. I admire the man who can calculate with mathematical accuracy the exact amount of money he can afford to spend and who has the iron will to spend just that amount and not a shilling over. I believe strongly in the principle of cutting my coat according to my cloth, but I never know at any particular moment precisely how much cloth I possess; and in such circumstances I suppose I cut my coat a little extravagantly rather than err on the side of economy. As I have made clear, I do not regard this as a virtue. It is, however, a protest, feeble though it may be, against the extravagant wave of economy that is now submerging the world.

Y. Y.

BONDS OF EMPIRE

(as indicated in Mr. Bennett's latest pronouncement)

'TWAS a sentimental epoch when Imperial ties implied
Common loyalties, traditions for which men had toiled and died,
Common aims and institutions, recognition of a claim
To good-fellowship and service on the strength of kinship's name.

We, more practically minded than our ancestors of old,
Weld our "Economic Empire" with Imperial bands of gold;
Preferences, quotas, bargains, tariff-pacts secure to-day
Our devotion to the Empire—just as long as it shall pay.

So, as each Imperial problem comes to task our mother-wit,
First we ask ourselves the question, "What do we get out of it?"
And for each Imperial partner I surmise the final test
Is, "Do we get from the Empire slightly more than all the rest?"

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

THE B.B.C.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—For many years I have tried to persuade my compatriots that there are in this country smouldering remainders of a culture which are being fanned into flame here and there by a new breath of appreciation for the real values of intelligence and beauty. To such foreign judgments the English may be indifferent. But can they really not learn from the intensive pre-war cultural propaganda of the Germans, or from the existence of Instituts Français throughout the world, that there are other exports than those of material goods? Trade may follow the flag, but I contend that it follows more certainly still a good book or a fine musical composition. Merchants in Holland, in Denmark, and in many other countries *do* read and think.

Now I understand that the B.B.C. is going to sweep away its talks on books and its dealings in ideas. Is the average Englishman aware of the extent to which these talks are followed in Holland? Has he ever been in one of the many Dutch homes where book criticisms from Savoy Hill are listened to, while notes are taken for the next book order to be placed individually or through the reading society? Good English books sell in Holland long before there is any talk of translating them into Dutch. Of course, it may be that as the English are no longer inclined to buy our produce, they do not expect us to buy their books. Yet, in this year of grace when, by the experience of Germany, America and France, the doctrine of protection is being so handsomely vindicated, I venture to submit that one last concession may be made to true conservatism: leave us free trade in ideas!—Yours, etc.,

1 Ormond Mansions, G. J. RENIER.
68 Lamb's Conduit Street, W.C.1.

THE *DAILY EXPRESS*

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The photographs that took the wrong turning are only items in a larger indictment which Mr. Beverley Baxter chooses to ignore. The photograph of dumped butter may have been a mistake—I believe it was—but that explanation hardly explains away the many other instances of falsely presented news which it would be possible to quote. Let me give one example which occurred towards the end of November.

For several weeks the *Daily Express* had lost no opportunity of suggesting—in bold type—that the Soviet was behind China. Then came the rumours that Soviet troops were actually assisting the Chinese in Manchuria. The *Daily Express* devoted the following space to the propagation of the rumour.

Headlines	1 line.
Bold type	14 lines.
Ordinary type	25 lines.

Later, the rumours were explicitly denied by the Soviet, the Chinese and the Japanese authorities. Did *The Daily Express* then devote equal space to the report of the denials? Not on your life! The day's quota of bold type was employed lavishly against the League of Nations and the space allotted to the mere denial of the false rumour was as follows:

Headlines	0 lines.
Bold type	0 lines.
Ordinary type	6 lines.

Furthermore these six lines were tucked away inconspicuously at the end of an account of the Tsitsihar fighting and read as follows:

> Meanwhile the Japanese, *apparently with a view to calming Moscow's feelings, formally* stated that "no positive action was taken by Soviet Russia during the battle on the Eastern and Western border." (Italics mine.)

No apology was offered for the Russian corpse, the Russian cartridge cases and the Russian-designed dugouts that had figured so prominently in an earlier issue.

Will Mr. Beverley Baxter blame this—and the similar cases of falsified pictures of which it is fairly typical—on the inefficiency of his staff?

Or does he regard it as a shining example of that "fair-mindedness and sense of decency" which he thinks so "conspicuously absent" from THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION?—Yours, etc., T. E. BEAN.

26 Ernocroft Road, Ludworth,
Marple Bridge.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I was greatly interested to read the explanation of the Editor of the *Daily Express* as to how the Russian butter became converted into American gold. Mr. Beverley Baxter states that the two pictures were sent to the composing room at the same time, but I hardly think that this is important, for I gather that pictures must be left lying about in the *Daily Express* composing room for years on end. My reason for saying this is that in March, 1930, a photograph of myself taking part in a cross country race in Richmond Park appeared in the *Daily Express*. The same photo minus the Richmond Park background again appeared in August, 1931, purporting to represent a Metropolitan Police athletic match at Stamford Bridge.

Personally I do not mind. In fact I rather like it. It all helps to make the world a little brighter. After all, in modern art we have had pictures that to everyone except the artist might represent anything you please. Why should we not have the same development in modern photography? Why not an impressionist photo which may represent policemen, cross country runners, American gold, Russian butter or anything else you like? In fact, I rather gathered that the *Daily Express* also took this view, for no reply or explanation was received from them when the *Week End Review* published a letter from me setting out the facts previously mentioned. Perhaps, however, we shall hear from Mr. Beverley Baxter next week.—Yours, etc.,

14 Bolingbroke Grove, G. C. BREND.
S.W.11.

TAXATION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am afraid some of your readers, after reading the remarks in the City columns of your issue of to-day's date, will look upon me as a kind of mixture between a Don Juan and a Don Quixote, though a bowler hat, striped trousers and an umbrella, as my make up, correspond more with the facts. No doubt I was presented in this manner mainly for my good by a man who has reason to know that the public will open its arms to, say, a Toreador where it would behave with more circumspection towards a City Editor. Still, I should like to be allowed to show that, if there is something picturesque about my proposals, they are entirely free of frills and perfectly businesslike.

The truth is that, up to the present, not enough distinction has been made between deflationary positions and inflationary positions by Governments in deciding upon their budgetary policies. It is well recognised everywhere that inflation may become ruinous and must be arrested by balanced budgets. But the fact is generally overlooked that deflation can be quite as ruinous as inflation, and that the natural cure as well as the best antidote to excessive deflation and falling commodity prices is to be found in budgetary deficits.

Thus, whilst it is certain that, at the present time, balanced budgets are essential in the debtor countries and in countries that have been forced by the concentration of gold in certain countries to suspend gold payments, it is equally certain that a large temporary remission of taxation effected simultaneously in these gold-holding countries, involving budgetary deficits, is the only sound policy for these countries to-day.

In effect, such a remission of taxation, if great enough, would enable these countries to absorb the goods and services made available for them by their producers at home and their debtors abroad, would restore the gold values of commodities, securities, and unduly depreciated currencies on the foreign exchange market, and would liquidate a generally "frozen" internal and international position.—Yours, etc.,

The Royal Automobile Club, A. H. ABBATT.
S.W.1.
December 12th.

BUY BRITISH

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Several of your correspondents have cast reflections on the "Buy British" campaign, without perhaps realising how important one aspect of the matter is. Fundamentally the slogan

is thoroughly bad advertising. It represents an appeal to sentiment in a reader where ultimately there is no room for sentiment at all. In the long run every business relies on the service it gives to the community. Now there is only one real standard of service; that of intrinsic merit. Any other consideration that is introduced, such as patriotism, can only serve to depreciate slowly and insidiously in the public mind this all-important standard of merit. A matter of elementary psychology. If we are asked to buy British because it is British and not because it is better or cheaper, we shall inevitably associate British with what is dearer or inferior, in some respect or other, to the foreign article. And that of course is in fact very often the case both as regards price and still more often as regards design.

If the slogan were "British Lasts Longer" or "British Food is Purer," there would at least be some *reason* in it, but "Buy British" is, *qua* advertising, as false as that ridiculous poster "Buy Goods Advertised on this Hoarding." I imagine the Empire Marketing Board is well aware of this and regards its present campaign as one of emergency, justified by the present crisis as are Mr. Runciman's duties. It will do well to remember, however, that Protection implies weakness and that the giant of of British industry did not gain his stature by wearing a great-coat of sentiment. If the Board wants a slogan for the New Year I present it with this for manufacturers, "Make British Goods Worth Buying."—Yours, etc.,

London. NOEL CARRINGTON.

SOCIALISM AND THE WASTE LAND

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Julian Bell criticises a sentence I quoted from Mr. A. L. Rowse's *Politics and the Younger Generation*, that "The ethical approach to politics misses the real nature of the problem." He replies that "Politics must be based on ethics," since desire for institutional change necessarily implies valuation and preference.

But Mr. Bell has misconstrued the sentence to which he objects, as its context makes plain in Mr. Rowse's book and, I had hoped, in my article. To attempt to deny the elegant tautology propounded by Mr. Bell was the intention of neither of us. The reference is totally different, and the attack is directed against the habit common among the older generation of radicals and progressives in this country of adopting "an ethical approach" to the day-to-day issues of political action and strategy, of making the means as well as the ends the subject of moral judgment. The English Left is still tainted with vestigial Nonconformity, and has an instructive as well as a prudential reluctance to admit that possibly the only method of attaining the promised land may be to charter a conveyance from Beelzebub in the shape of an appeal to class-antagonism and interest.

It was this romantic perfectionism, with all its abracadabra of "Councils of State," "men of goodwill," "social evolution," and the like, which Mr. Rowse characterised as "the ethical approach," and I gather from internal evidence that Mr. Bell will agree that in certain circumstances it tends "to miss the real nature of the problem."

For instance, Mr. Keynes, though no pietist, was surely influenced by faith more than reason when he lately suggested that a majority for an "economically sound policy" may shortly be won by "an appeal to the noblest passions of the community." One naturally hopes he is right, though such data as experience provides perhaps justify a measure of scepticism. And it would be assuring to be able to feel that in any one of a number of other possible contingencies, Labour leadership would not hesitate to become suitably Machiavellian, instead of adding to the complexity of an already difficult strategic problem by a cloud of "mere moral babble."—Yours, etc.,

2 Danehurst Gardens, OWEN PAPINEAU.
Ilford, Essex.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I feel sure I am only one among many of Mr. Julian Bell's generation in admiring his truly marvellous letter in your issue of December 12th, although I find it absolutely impossible to make out what he means. The first thing is that Mr. Bell readily agrees with Mr. Papineau in his desire to have "a more violent and unscrupulous propaganda based on the facts of class conflict." Good. He next says, "Obviously, since politics is nothing but the making of choices by (or for) human beings, it is necessarily based on ethics." Excellent, but why in that case go in for "a more violent and unscrupulous propaganda"? As a finale, Mr. Bell gives us the following exquisite but remarkable sentence. "As a further consequence it [presumably the path of excess which leads to the place of wisdom] makes possible the old alliance between political Socialism and a decent scepticism about morals."

Would it be out of the picture to ask how Mr. Bell threads his way through this generous labyrinth of ethical beliefs, bases and basilisks, and whether the performance of this extraordinary beat has anything to do with Socialism or Waste Land?—Yours, etc.,

A DECENT SCEPTIC.

ITALIAN DEPORTEES

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your anonymous correspondent from Switzerland, who suggests that a statue should be erected in Lipari Island to celebrate my contention that five lire daily go a long way in that sunny spot, may have a pretty turn of humour, but his knowledge of the elements of geography is sadly inadequate. To speak of Lipari, as he has done, or of its six lovely neighbours forming the Aeolian Archipelagus, famed in mythology, in history and in literature, as though they were some desolate rocks shunned by man and beast, is to carry romancing beyond the limits of common sense. The Island of Lipari contains two towns, the chief of which, bearing the same name, has a population of 7,500, is the seat of a bishop, and produces, mainly for export, the celebrated Malmsey wine, as well as pumice stone. The island also contains sulphur springs and vapour baths, which were known and used in ancient times. The corporate life of those thriving little communities has been uninterrupted since the dawn of history. Lipari, in particular, was an important naval station throughout the Punic wars. It changed hands frequently in the middle ages (I have been quoting from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) and became later a favourite health resort. Your correspondent may learn much more as to the history and the beauty, the comfort and the cheapness of life at Lipari, from an enthusiastic book, *Die Liparischen Inseln*, printed privately at Prague, in eight volumes, and written in 1893 by the Archduke Ludwig Salvator of Austria, who spent several years at Lipari. That island is not only salubrious and well populated, but is also, I repeat, one of the cheapest places imaginable. For example, fish of all sorts is so plentiful that three or four lire will buy a kilogram of lobsters, or red mullet, or turbot, whiting, sprats, sword-fish, etc.

No statue is required to commend to posterity any man who can live at Lipari on five lire a day. It is the common experience of many happy, if frugal, islanders. Finally, as to lack of water, it is well known that all the smaller volcanic islands in the Mediterranean are waterless. Even Capri, with its floating population of wealthy visitors, has little or no water. But the mainland is so near that plentiful supplies are available at all times.—Yours, etc.,

20 Regent's Park Terrace, CARLO CAMAGNA.
Gloucester Gate.

THE CAUSATION OF CANCER

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I sympathise with Mr. Ellis Barker in his attempt to get the medical profession to see the single and obvious cause of cancer. He is fighting the age-old battle of those who see evil as a simple intrusion into a good world, something that could easily be disentangled and cast out, if only the blind would see. With him there stand Empire Free Traders, single taxers, equalisers of incomes, Christian Scientists, Geoplanarians, British Israelities and Fascists, Marxians, osteopaths, homeopaths, and exponents of "Abram's box." To all of them there is granted this vision of the one simple and obvious good necessary to eliminate the one simple and obvious evil. In Mr. Barker's case it is a return to the habits of that Noble Savage so much more easily found in the works of Voltaire and Rousseau than in those of the modern anthropologist.

To the opposing class, evil, be it social, economical, moral, or physical, is inextricably mixed with the stuff of which the Universe is made. A sad and almost Manichæan group, to which, I am afraid, the bulk of my profession belongs. They see cancer attack the healthy child as well as the aged barman. They see

in a tuberculous patient the sum of many factors; not only the factor of wrong living which Mr. Barker so carefully analyses, but factors of racial and personal resistance, and behind all these that enemy of all animal life, the bacillus of Koch.

In malaria again, "unfettered common sense" insisted for ages that the proper way to avoid the disease was to avoid marshes. Then the laboratory worker with test-tube and microscope found a secondary cause in the mosquito, and a third one in the parasite of that insect. Lately he has even claimed the synthesis of the long-sought preventive of the disease as distinct from the ancient quinine cure.

Led on by these probably illusive analogies, and undeterred by the conspicuous failure of laboratory methods in chemistry, metallurgy, and physics, the orthodox medical profession attacks a dark thicket of shifting and tangled facts, instead of following the simple and obvious way to health and happiness. It is deplorable, and one can only thank Mr. Barker for a characteristic piece of generosity to his opponents. In demonstrating the futility of laboratory work he quotes as truths three typical laboratory working hypotheses: the importance of vitamins, the causation of cancer by tar derivatives, and the poisoning of the body by its own products.—Yours, etc.,

48 Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square, London, W.1.
14th December.

DENIS BROWNE.

HOSPITALS AND SWEEPSTAKES

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—One hears so much about the impracticability of an English hospitals sweepstake because of its effect upon present subscribers that you may be interested in a letter which I have received from a subscriber to the East London Hospital for Children.

This gentleman threatens to discontinue his subscription to my hospital unless hospitals in general take a decided action in favour of legalising sweepstakes for the benefit of the English hospitals. This somewhat novel point of view is at least interesting as indicative of the growing impatience amongst habitual subscribers who realise that their continued efforts, unsupplemented by other and perhaps drastic means, cannot in these days suffice to keep going the present voluntary hospital system.

It is not for me as the secretary of one of the smallest units of this system to express an opinion for or against sweepstakes as a desirable method of financing what is after all national work. If I were to judge by the present financial position of this hospital whose activities in an East End slum are little known to the outer world, it would indeed seem that the flow of voluntary contributions is rapidly being scorched up under burning taxation and general financial stress.—Yours, etc.,

East London Hospital for Children, Shadwell, E.1.

W. M. WILCOX. Secretary.

THE TRAVELLER'S DRINKS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—With reference to the last problem in your "London Diary" may I point out that the traveller's exertions may be theoretically non-existent and that he merely takes advantage of values surrendered by those who transported the dollars to the alien countries in the first place, and thereby incurred a loss on them. It is they, therefore, who pay for the drinks.

If I were to buy a copy of the NEW STATESMAN with a sixpence dropped by you in the street, surely you would "pay for" it, and not I by reason of my exertion in picking up the coin.—Yours, etc.,

Abercorn, King's Road, Richmond, Surrey.

FRED W. SINCLAIR.

["Critic" writes: Other correspondents have raised similar points and I find economists arguing vehemently about the answer. One difficulty is that the ways in which the governments are supposed to maintain the prescribed exchange relationship is not known. We hold that the transportation of the dollars is "work" and that the drinks are the price of the traveller's exertions; though the border line may be a narrow one between labour of this kind and the picking-up of dropped sixpences. Suppose a Shakespeare first folio is found in a fourpenny tub. Is not the price obtained for it a return for the finder's "enterprise"? Or is he to regard it as a free gift from whoever first let the bargain go? But I agree that in some circumstances the governments would be paying for the drinks in this sense: that they conduct their exchange operations at a loss in order to maintain the prescribed relationship of their currencies.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE VARSITY MATCH

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—A drop of Scots blood makes me economical in using the word "stop" with sufficient freedom in press telegrams. Hence my article on the University Rugger match was printed to include the following libel on two fine players. "Cambridge got to threequarter way. For once their hooker nipped the ball. As usual Tallent deceived Jenkins . . ." Punctuation can make liars of us all. What I wished to say was "Cambridge got to threequarter way for once. Their hooker nipped the ball as usual. Tallent deceived Jenkins . . ."—Yours, apologetically,

GEOFFREY WEALD.

Miscellany

THE GAMES-PLAYING SPANIARD

OUR national illusions die hard, but one at least of them must be definitely consigned to the lumber-room. It is the pious belief, always expressed with a certain condescension, that the world will ultimately be made a new and better place by the spread of the British sporting spirit. This particular illusion has withered, not because British games have proved untransplantable, but for the quite different reason that other nations have adopted them with such enthusiasm that they have made them their own, and are now playing them each according to their particular temperament.

If a divergence is already perceptible in nations which come of British stock, how much more flagrant is it in races which are frankly foreign. The writer has never forgotten one of the first occasions when he played golf in France. His opponent, after an exceptionally poor shot, petulantly exclaimed: "Oh! là, là!" Shade of Tom Morris! Dignity of the Royal and Ancient Game! If you had no good British oaths at your service, better to have remained eternally silent. It is impossible to define in words why such an exclamation should be shocking, but the enormity of it can be felt. It evokes in three trivial syllables the whole tremendous gulf which separates Gaul from Gale.

And yet the Frenchman had a stylish swing, did not kick his ball in the rough, and, but for that one lapse, behaved as a correct and chivalrous opponent. These considerations encourage one to re-examine the attitude of other nations towards games which we had supposed must be approached in a certain reverential frame of mind of which only we had the secret. Is it possible that sport, like art, may be interpreted in several different ways, without for that forfeiting the name? The Spanish interpretation is of considerable interest, because, although it does not square with our own, it is that of a nation which takes the matter seriously.

Here again, as good an example as any is to be found in golf, which some Spaniards are beginning to play, and not look on merely as a diversion for eccentric foreigners. A leading Spanish daily, under the heading "Physical Education," explains the new game to its readers.

"The whole 'philosophy'—if the word can be permitted—of the sport of *golf* consists in this: that it obliges the player to take a healthy, comfortable, and interesting walk,

without him ever being in danger of complaining of fatigue. This in country surroundings, in the open air, and in full daylight."

As the golfer continues to play, his muscles grow suppler and stronger, his heart and lungs benefit, and all the organs of his body are stimulated to intenser activity. Even to achieve such results, few would be willing to take a five-mile walk two or three times a week, but at golf the health seeker is lured on in spite of himself. Why? The writer, knowing his public, does not waste words in explaining the inexplicable. He contents himself with controverting dogmatically the opinion "that it is silly to walk behind a little ball hitting it from one spot to another," and concludes (somewhat lamely) by remarking: "Contrary to what might be supposed, *golf*, besides being a healthy sport, is a game which arouses considerable interest."

For another glimpse of the Spanish point of view, this passage from a magazine is worth quoting:

"Even nations which boast the highest culture, and which are generally acknowledged to possess a calmer mentality and a more placid temperament—like the English—feel themselves attracted with irresistible force, with morbid frenzy, by spectacles which, like pugilism, exceed in barbarity bull-fighting."

Two points are already becoming clear. First, the educated Spaniard—the qualification is necessary—looks on games not as an end, but as a means to a healthier physique. The second point is an aversion from the spectacular and the brutal, and a particular dislike, therefore, of sports like heavy-weight boxing, which combine the two. Remember that it is still the educated Spaniard who speaks. Among the masses a big boxing-match marks a red-letter day. League football is a never-failing topic of conversation, nor is interest in it confined to the teams of the Peninsula. The Spanish football "fan" is perfectly acquainted with the achievements and prospects of the principal English clubs.

But all this is professional sport, and, because he only knows it under that aspect, the educated Spaniard condemns it. What strikes him first in Association football is the exaggerated partisanship of spectators and players, and the partiality or incapacity of referees. He doubts whether amateur football can be entirely free from the same abuses. His conception of a boxing match is of two massive heavyweights pounding each other in the face until one of them falls down, and even if he can be brought to admit that there is a science of boxing, he is not willing to have it taught his sons. Bull-fighting, which would seem to combine in the highest degree the two features he most detests, is on rather a different level. It is not regarded as a sport, but as a "fiesta." It is rather a ceremony, consecrated by its peculiarly Spanish associations, and it enjoys something of the traditional prestige of the regional dances and songs, even of the religious processions. Moreover, the chief victims of the bull-fight are the bulls and horses, and many educated Spaniards, while remaining highly sensitive to the sufferings of their fellow-men, are comparatively indifferent to those of animals.

There remain all the professional "sports"—making the term as elastic as possible—which are patronised by one section of the nation, and considered as more or less undesirable by the other. Such are horse-racing, greyhound and dirt-track racing (in Madrid), and the Basque pelota game, which belongs to the same family as racquets, and is one which any nation might be proud to have evolved. It demands sound physique, quickness of hand and eye, and a thorough understanding between the two partners. But today it is very largely in the hands of professionals, who perform every night in the courts which exist in nearly all the big cities. For weeks running the players are the same, and the matches have small attraction except for those who are there to bet on the result.

More important than this is the amateur element. Of recent years a new interest in sport has grown up among the wealthier classes. It embraces yachting, polo, ski-ing—which may be practised on the mountains north of Madrid during six months of the year—and tennis, as well as golf. In fact, all the more expensive forms of sport. The Spaniard is attracted towards them for various reasons, of which the chief is a desire to keep pace with the times. As in France, *el deporte* is a new social diversion. For the women it is not unconnected with the cult of the slim line and the shorter skirt. With men it is, in part, a new kind of snobbery.

What lies between this conception of sport as the rich man's plaything, and the popular conception of it as a spectacle? There are many amateur clubs in the country devoted to athletics, swimming, rowing, hockey and Rugby football. The growth of these is a movement of prime importance, and it is among their members that the true games-playing Spaniard is to be found. Often, however, they are badly organised and lack means. These strictures do not apply to the new Royal Country Club, which is shortly to be opened on the outskirts of Madrid. The plans provide for polo and hockey grounds, a golf course, a swimming bath, tennis courts, and a pelota *frontón*. There is a large club-house containing a ball-room, restaurant, bar, etc. It seems that this again is an affair for the rich man, and that many will join as non-playing members in order to obtain a certain social cachet. Meanwhile, the poorer amateur is badly in need of encouragement.

The universities have no official games organisations, and those schools which possess them are extremely rare. One of the few exceptions is the Colegio Cantabro at Santander, which has its own football ground and tennis courts. But this school, where the inclusive fees are £100 per annum, is considered to be altogether out of reach of the average purse, and also, by several of its features, to be a departure from Spanish educational traditions. The amateur, dependent from start to finish on his own efforts, flounders along, sometimes with surprisingly good results. But at present he has a hard struggle, and if ever the path is made easier for him (e.g., by the co-operation of the schools) there is little likelihood that he will exalt sport above the numerous other interests of life. It will serve as a means to health and to physical perfection, for such, according to the thinking Spaniard, is its true role in the development of the individual.

GEOFFREY BRERETON.

MUSICAL TARIFFS

THE recent cancellation of the visit of Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Symphony Orchestra to Paris—for which Sir Thomas Beecham and the secretary of the L.S.O. stated in a letter to the press they were not responsible—brings the subject of musical tariffs before us in a way we can no longer ignore. It is doubtful whether French musicians have been reading our London daily newspapers, but perhaps they have been told of the shocking story, narrated in the *Daily Telegraph*, by that true-blue Englishman, Mr. Herbert Hughes, of the poor English violinist who at last was given a public engagement through patriotic pressure. This poor fellow, who had passed his life watching the successful career of inferior foreigners (Mr. Albert Sammons and Mr. Arthur Catterall, for example!!), when the day came for the rehearsal was unable to get his violin out of pawn. At the last moment a foreigner with a violin out of pawn had to be found, and so English music received another death-blow. This was the story Mr. Hughes related in the *Daily Telegraph*, and I, in common

with thousands of other readers, no doubt, sobbed over it at my breakfast table.

But we Englishmen welcome Mr. Herbert Hughes, who, in common with many other Irishmen, enlivens our native English gloom with brilliant stories for which we pay in sobs or cash, and we have no quarrel with him as an Irishman. Indeed, it is partly because I am afraid of our losing Mr. Hughes and his fellow-countrymen that I venture to draw attention to what is happening. After the appearance of this story there began an intensive propaganda for musical protection, in which the Incorporated Society of Musicians, through its secretary, Mr. Frank Eames, took part. From long experience, which shows that the most intensive patriotic propaganda in England is nearly always carried on by aliens under English names, one would suspect Mr. Frank Eames of being, let us say, an Egyptian, but he is not. I would suggest, however, that neither the Secretary nor the Council of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, who have embarked upon this new public policy of protection, have given proper thought to the matter. Of course, people have said to me, "What do these potty little institutions matter; whoever heard of the Incorporated Society of Musicians?" But I cannot accept that view. After all, upon the Council of the I.S.M. we find Sir John McEwen (another Englishman!), Sir Hugh Allen, and Sir Landon Ronald (more English than the English!). These three gentlemen and musicians are heads of the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music, and the Guildhall School of Music. Have these three gentlemen put this question clearly and honestly to their own minds, whether they are, first of all, musicians or business men? Because I suggest that it is necessary for them to do so before they go any farther.

From a business point of view, perhaps, a case for musical protection can be made out. I say "perhaps" because I cannot believe that musical protection is, ultimately, even a good business policy. But as a general cultural policy and from a musical point of view there is nothing to be said for it at all. However, from whatever point of view we regard their claim for musical protection and their deputation to the Minister of Labour, I submit that their policy is not only wrong, short-sighted, and doomed to failure, but one that is thoroughly discreditable to musicians and to such a body as the Incorporated Society of Musicians. Can one imagine such behaviour among the scientists? Can one imagine such bodies as the Royal Society and the Royal Institution petitioning the Minister of Labour to keep out foreign scientists and foreign scientific works from entering this country? It is inconceivable, and why is it inconceivable? It is inconceivable because the scientists are proud of their profession, put their science before themselves, regard all other scientists as fellow-workers in a great cause, and *have no inferiority complex before European scientists*. Every scientist in Europe has heard of our Royal Society and our Royal Institution. No musician in Europe, I venture to say, has ever heard of the Incorporated Society of Musicians or ever will hear of it or care a damn for it whilst our English musicians keep their present narrow, petty, provincial, and ignorant attitude towards the art of music. I am constantly being amazed at English musicians having so little pride and interest in their art that they can look upon the achievements of foreign artists with envy and jealousy. I am sure that even in commerce and industry there does not exist such a miserable, pettifogging spirit. Even English industrialists and manufacturers study foreign methods, and there is a constant intercourse between English and foreign business men. There are plenty of far-sighted economists in England and abroad who constantly assert that the economic welfare of the different European countries is not separate but one. Does any English musician ever write or speak in public or private except with rancour against foreign musicians? That an English musician of the status of Mr. Arnold Bax—and I mention Mr. Bax because he wrote a public letter in support of this movement calling for "protective safeguards" for music—should have allowed himself to be put in such an unseemly and discreditable position is almost unbelievable.

And now let us consider the matter from a purely business point of view. At the present moment foreign artists pay the full rate of income tax on their earnings in this country and have done so for a long time. This in spite of the fact that English musicians are not called upon to pay income tax in many countries abroad. Of course it will be said that we have far more foreign musicians visiting us than any other European country. I doubt if it is altogether true, for the Scandinavian countries, in proportion to their wealth, probably have more; but, as far as Government taxes are concerned, these are matters for arrangement between the countries concerned, and there should be reciprocal agreements on these matters. As for the interchange of cultural products generally, I should say that our foreign cultural imports as a whole were far less, absolutely, than those of Germany. For example, we have in this country nothing analogous to the Tauchnitz Library, which publishes hundreds of books *in English* and sells many thousands of copies annually in Germany and Austria. And the Tauchnitz publishing firm pays English authors royalties, for I myself have received money from Tauchnitz. Then there is an immense consumption of English literature on the Continent generally. In Germany and Austria, particularly, authors such as Edgar Wallace, John Galsworthy and Bernard Shaw are best sellers. Do German authors get up and protest? Is there an Incorporated Society of German Authors which begs for protective safeguards against English writers? I have never heard of it, and I have never heard of a German author writing against English authors and English literature and complaining that, owing to Mr. John Galsworthy, he could not sell his own novels. But if he did he would be laughed at publicly in his own country.

I would suggest that it is due to Sir Hugh Allen's position as Professor of Music at Oxford University that he publicly disassociates himself from this movement for "protective safeguards" (to use the Incorporated Society of Musicians' own words), which is largely a journalistic stunt, but might do great damage to musical culture in this country if successful. It is hardly proper for an Oxford professor to join in a movement for restricting cultural relations between England and other countries, and it is time that some of our English musicians showed a little dignity and self-respect and did not scuttle about like rabbits on the appearance of any foreign musician.

W. J. TURNER.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, December 19th—
Rugby Football. England *v.* The Rest. Twickenham.
Royal Choral Society. Carols. Albert Hall, 2.30.
D. F. Tovey. Piano Recital. Wigmore Hall, 3.

Sunday, December 20th—
S. K. Ratcliffe on "Tasks and Hopes for 1932," Conway Hall, 11.

Monday, December 21st—
"The Gay Adventure," by Walter Hackett, Whitehall Theatre.
"Max and Mr. Max," Vaudeville Theatre.
"A Pair of Spectacles," by Sydney Grundy, Westminster Theatre. Matinée.

Tuesday, December 22nd—
Mr. Roger Fry on "Characteristics of French Painting," B.B.C., 6.50.
"Aladdin," by V. C. Clinton-Baddeley and Walter Leigh, Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

Wednesday, December 23rd—
Miss Jean Sterling Mackinlay's Children's Matinées, Grafton Theatre.
Alexander and Mose, Piccadilly Theatre. Matinée.
"The Faithful Heart," Comedy Theatre.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

IN that fine poem in which Mr. Belloc trounced the don who had attacked his Chesterton, he spoke brave words in praise of other and noble dons. He wrote, of course, of the dons of Oxford; but, except for their quaint pedantry in calling common rooms combination rooms, the dons of Cambridge are as worthy of praise as those of Oxford. Unless one be one of those rare amphibious undergraduates who have frequented both Universities, a man can never know Oxford and Cambridge with an equal intimacy. Nor am I sure that residence in the two Universities gives a man the deep knowledge we might hope. In the works of neither Calverley (once Blayds) nor of J. E. Flecker is there anything which we could not expect from a mono-Universitarian. The present Dean of St. Paul's, whose residence at Cambridge was but that of a graduate, does at times seem to show the disadvantages of either University—most men who migrate in eld from their own Alma Mater to the other, retain an obstinate affection for the old love, and keep a sense of pilgrimage in the place of their adoption. Though, as I say, no honest man can doubt there are as good dons by the Cam as by the Isis, sometimes one University will get a man who seems more properly to belong to the other. I think that may be in Mr. Lowes Dickinson's mind in his brilliant little sketch of McTaggart (Cambridge University Press, 6s.). When McTaggart was still at Clifton, a republican and an atheist, Dr. Percival, once head master there and then President of Trinity College, Oxford,

> wrote to his mother on hearing of his intention of going to Trinity College, Cambridge, to press the claims of Oxford, suggesting that the Fellows of his College might offer him an exhibition or a scholarship on the showing of what he had written at Clifton. Had this arrangement been accepted it is interesting to speculate whether Jack would not have been as patriotic for the sister University as he became in fact for Cambridge, and as humorously contemptuous of the claims of Oxford.

It is worth noticing that Oxford as a place, and the neighbourhood of Oxford, exercised a fascination over him; and the low level of Cambridge must have seemed a little dismal to one used to the downs of Clifton and the glories of Leigh Wood. Mr. Dickinson writes:

> We four, that is McTaggart, Wedd, Fry and myself, used at this time to row down the Thames from Lechlade to Oxford at the close of the summer term and those few days were a wonderful blend of fun and sentiment. McTaggart bubbled over all the time. He could not row, of course, but we made him do so. "Time, Bow," said the Cox, and McTaggart replied "Space." He read aloud or quoted Dickens, whom he knew almost by heart. The long stretches choked with rushes and reeds above Oxford; Abingdon, where we would pass the night and lie in the hay by the river; the wonderful wooded reach between Pangbourne and Mapledurham; the Mill at Streatley which we climbed at sunset; the locks with their roaring water; teas in riverside gardens; a moonlight night at Shipley; the splendid prospect of Windsor and ices in the famous tuck-shop; it all lingers still in my mind after forty years, and the ghost of McTaggart rises up inspiring and enchanting it all, witty, absurd, sentimental, adorable.

McTaggart was that most genial of creatures, an eccentric philosopher. All men who profess philosophy should be a little odd, so that the precision (as we trust) of their judgments be balanced by some extravagance of language, gesture, or opinion. McTaggart, however, was eccentric in his philosophy. Although he abandoned his republicanism and became one of the stoutest of Tory monarchists, he retained his atheism. This he combined with a passionate belief in the immortality of man. There is, to my mind, little sign in his philosophic books that he properly appreciated the extreme difficulty of his doctrine; or, indeed, ever considered whether he could answer the argument for theism made by such a philosopher as Von Hügel. His mind delighted in inconsistencies; and, unswerving as he was in his pursuit of truth, he sometimes took loyalty to be a kind of truth. Which it well may be. His dislike of theism appears to have been based almost entirely on the value he attached to human love, "passionate, all-absorbing, all-consuming love."

> It can't be nice to believe in God I should think. It would be horrible to think that there was anyone who was closer to one than one's friends. I want to feel, and I do feel, that my love for them and the same love that other people have for their friends is the only real thing in the world. I have no room left in my life for God, or rather my life is full of God already. I should say, as the Mahometan girl did in Kipling's story, "I bear witness that there is no God save thee, my beloved."

He did not feel the need of validating or supporting this sense of the eternal quality of human affection; and so he never really went out on the adventure of God. I hope it is not unkind to suggest that his friends may sometimes have felt the need to which McTaggart was a stranger, especially in the days of the war, when he was foremost in the demand that Bertrand Russell should be expelled from his college. It is indeed hard to see how this demand can be reconciled with the conviction that love of friends "is the only real thing in the world"; while it is obviously compatible with a belief that everything must give way to truth as a man sees it—and by that door God breaks into the system of the most indurate atheist.

* * *

Of the lovable, extravagant, simple man, Mr. Dickinson gives a fine account, and has drawn on other friends of "Jack" for their contributions. Here is a recollection by Miss Stawell from which all cat lovers will understand the man:

> I was laughing at him for the way he spoilt Pushkin: "Why," I said, "I believe if there was only one cosy chair in the room you would give it to Pushkin and take the floor yourself." "Of course I would," he said, "it would be only fair. I could think about the Absolute—I don't believe Pushkin can."

In the chapter on his literary tastes, which were broad and sensible rather than sensitive, there is a delightful judgment *apropos* of D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow*:—

> It isn't exactly Sunday School literature, but it seems to me—as far as I can remember—that the *Kreutzer Sonata* was at least as obscene and very much duller. But then, of course, Tolstoy had a high moral purpose. What we really need is a law against [illegible] moral purposes—or at any rate against exposing them in publ[illegible]

* * *

McTaggart believed not only in the immortality bu[illegible] the transmigration of souls. In this, as in most of his [illegible] work, he seemed to belong to another age than ours. It is easier to picture him in the gymnasium with Socrates than in the combination room with R. V. Lawrence and Bertrand Russell. Indeed, as I read the book of Mr. Dickinson's reprinted broadcast talks, *Plato and His Dialogues* (Allen and Unwin, 6s.), I found myself wishing that the investigations of scientific philosophers into the habits of time and space could lead, if it were only for a few fortunate people's benefit, to the making of some contrivance to put us beyond the present inconveniences of time and space. It would have been of the utmost benefit to McTaggart, and how exciting for all of us, could we have re-presented some of those arguments of Socrates and the sophists, or introduced the contestant from the Cam to Phaedrus as he walked beside the Ilissus. In their best aspects, in that atmosphere of laughter and the love of friends, both Oxford and Cambridge only follow the example of the schools of Athens. That life Mr. Dickinson re-creates for us, with his old skill and enthusiasm, in this book of comment and quotation. He gives us reason to hold it true that the Ilissus is more important than the Mississippi; and he justifies his claim that to come back to Greek books is to experience "a sudden sense of a lightening of the gloom, of clarity, of first-handedness, and an ever-vigorous life of the mind."

RICHARD SUNNE.

KEYNESSANDRA

Essays in Persuasion. By J. M. KEYNES. Macmillan. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Keynes in his preface remarks that his book might well have been entitled "Essays in Prophecy and Persuasion," and it is as a prophet that I, who in economics am a layman, propose primarily to consider him. Not that it is possible or desirable to separate completely his two functions; indeed for the layman, whose opinions on Mr. Keynes's economic theories would be impertinences, the most interesting thing is the relation between his powers of prophecy and his powers of persuasion. No doubt, ever since the time of Isaiah the voice of the prophet has more often than not been merely the voice of one crying in the wilderness. His object, however, was not to cry "Woe! Woe!" but, as with Mr. Keynes, to persuade, to "attempt to influence opinion."

Mr. Keynes says himself that his prophecy has been much more successful than his persuasion. The fact is a remarkable one and worth a little investigation. He is universally recognised as one of the greatest authorities on all economic questions and particularly upon finance and currency questions. He is not simply an academic and theoretical economist, but before, during, and since the war has played an active part in administration, politics, and the City. Outside the small circle of politicians who control the party and the political machines he has an enormous reputation. An intelligent but conservative minded stockbroker of my acquaintance, whenever we meet and talk politics, always sooner or later ends up by saying vehemently: "That man Keynes is always right; he is the only man in the country who has always been right ever since the war; the way to get us out of the mess would be to make him Chancellor of the Exchequer." That view is, I am convinced, very common among intelligent people whose business or occupations bring them in daily contact with the financial machine. It makes it all the more remarkable that Mr. Keynes has failed so completely in that important function of the prophet, persuasion, the influencing of public opinion and of policy, the convincing of those in authority before the event that his prophecies will be proved correct.

For to read this book of his is to see that he has always been a voice crying in the wilderness. It is a fascinating but melancholy book. He has collected in it his writings on the major economic problems of practical politics since 1918, i.e., upon the Peace Treaty and Reparations, inter-allied debts, inflation and deflation, and the gold standard. Within each of these subjects the material is arranged chronologically so that it is possible to see what opinion he was expressing and what policy he was urging at any particular moment. If you take the broadest view of these vast and vital problems with which he was dealing, there can be no real dispute now that Mr. Keynes was always right. If Mr. Lloyd George had followed Mr. Keynes's policy with regard to reparations in the Treaty we should have been spared the economic consequences of the peace; if Mr. Baldwin had followed his policy with regard to the return to the gold standard, we should have been spared the economic consequences of Mr. Churchill; if Mr. MacDonald and the bankers had followed his policy with regard to unemployment, we should have been spared the economic consequences of Lord Snowden and Mr. Norman. In other words, if Mr. Keynes had persuaded the politicians, we should all now be far more prosperous than we are. In fact, however, he never persuaded them and he has had no effect upon the actual policy of the country during the last 12 years. He has remained a brilliant Cassandra who, the dictionaries tell us, was a prophet of ill, and whose prophecies were fated to be true but unbelieved.

The question why this should have been lamentably so is interesting, and Mr. Keynes's book throws a certain amount of light upon it. I suggest that one reason for Mr. Keynes's failure may be found in the ratio of his own cleverness to the average stupidity of distinguished persons who reach the top of the tree in practical affairs. The effect of stupidity in great historical events like the French Revolution, the war, the peace, and the economic crisis through which the world is now passing, is always underrated both by contemporaries and historians. The ordinary man has no conception how stupid a man may be and yet reach the eminence of a directorship of one of the great banks or even the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. If he wishes to learn, he should read some of the pronouncements of the Chairmen of the five Great Banks during the last ten years, which are quoted by Mr. Keynes. There is a certain degree of stupidity which will no more mix with a certain degree of cleverness than oil with water. Stupid people are always suspicious of cleverness, but Mr. Keynes's kind of super-cleverness they regard as definitely indecent and immoral. It is true that the economist has occasionally been able to persuade the practical man and so profoundly influence the policy and statesmanship of an era, but only on condition that his cleverness was concealed or disguised. I do not believe that even Pitt would have listened to Adam Smith, if Adam Smith had been or had seemed to be as clever as Mr. Keynes. Moreover, Mr. Keynes uses his cleverness recklessly like an artist, not like a person who wants to persuade a bank director. Indeed, he says the most brilliant things about bank directors which will give immense pleasure to his readers, but which must have given the bank directors considerable pain.

A second reason why Mr. Keynes fails to persuade may be that his long-term prophecies seem to be far more convincing than his short-term prophecies. In other words, as a politician his strategy is much better than his tactics. He has one of the rarest qualities, political (and economic) imagination, and he has the true prophet's instinctive vision of the future as it will be determined by alternative courses of action. But it works on a large scale. The politician, however, is always thinking of what is going to happen next summer or next winter, not of what is going to happen in three years' time. To satisfy the politician you have to be a short-term prophet and to show that curious quality, political judgment, of which there is not much evidence in Mr. Keynes's book.

The result is that, as I said, from one point of view his book makes melancholy reading. For he remains in the end a prophet of evil and though his prophecies are real prophecies, and practically always true, they are in a sense *ex post facto* prophecies. It was after the treaty had been made, after we had returned to the gold standard, that he told us what the ruinous consequences of these actions would be. And so we are left with no more consolation than the old tag about a prophet and his own country.

"LEONARD WOOLF."

THE SOUL OF BERLIN

Alexanderplatz: The Story of Franz Biberkopf. By ALFRED DÖBLIN. Translated by Eugene Jolas. Secker. 8s. 6d.

It is not exactly that, in order to realise *Alexanderplatz*, you must set yourself to learn and accept its formula; it is not exactly that the book and its method are acquired tastes, at first formidable and a little distasteful, later a delectation; it is rather that you and Herr Döblin will "click"—and remain friends for life.

Or else, of course, you will not. The alternative is undeniable; and I daresay the majority of British novel-readers—confronted with this huge work, written in an unfamiliar and at first baffling style, dealing with a city of which they know little and a social ethic for which they care less—will be tempted to throw up the job in despair and turn to more customary, less exigent, fiction for their leisure reading.

One cannot blame them. One can only appeal to them to give the book at least a fair chance; for within its covers, up and down its four hundred closely printed pages, they will find the most magnificent panorama of a post-war metropolis yet contrived; a tale of tragedy, of tenderness, and of a pathos at times unbearable; a triumphant justification of one type of modernism in literary technique; and, perhaps most unusual of all, a masterpiece of translation. For not the least remarkable feature of this English rendering of *Alexanderplatz* is the English into which it has been rendered. Döblin in German is tremendous and majestic, but—one would have said—impossible of translation. Mr. Eugene Jolas, editor of *transition*, has achieved the impossible.

The busy square known as the Alexanderplatz is one of the principal traffic centres of Berlin. A large and irregular open space, from which radiate several main streets, across which grind a dozen lines of tramway, above which rise the echoing viaducts and one of the chief stations of the Stadtbahn, it stands between the business and official quarters of the town and the industrial, working class and slum areas which stretch to north and east and south. Police Headquarters abut on "the Alex" (as the Berliners call it), and in the square itself policemen swarm; No. I District Court, the Central Markets of the city and the few picturesque fragments of old Berlin which still survive, are close at hand. Long, bleak, noisy, ruthless

streets run out from the Alex, south and north to the "red" suburbs of Neukölln and Wedding; east to Friedrichshain with its vast park, its piled apartment blocks, its slaughter-houses; north again to Reinickendorf, Pankow, and Weissensee, where factories alternate with streets of dismal dwellings, and working folk, crowded into steep grey blocks of flats, stream to work at daybreak and back again at dusk. Public authority and building contractors are always busy on reconstruction works in the Alex, and the square is a litter of hoardings, heaps of gravel, piles of girders. Mechanical drills thud deafeningly; a crash of rubble shows the house-breakers at work, tearing down the Berlin of fifty years ago to make way for the Berlin of a rather problematical tomorrow. And in and out the trams screech and clang their bells; the overhead trains go rumbling by; taxis hoot, brakes grind, hawkers shout on the pavements, and the patient, rather shabby throng of Berlin men and women jostle and push and drag their way to office, shop or café, with in their eyes that look of disillusion and indifferent weariness, which the horrors of the twelve years since 1919 have stamped for ever on the faces of at least one German generation.

Alfred Döblin has done well to choose as title for his pageant of Berlin, and as centre for its massed and turbulent action, this vital point in the city's geography, this thrusting, inelegant, rather cruel Alexanderplatz, which of all traffic centres in the Prussian capital is the most characteristic and the most indigenous. He presents the passers-by, the vehicles, the police on point-duty, the shops with their signs and lettering, the hoardings, the municipal notices, the newspaper placards. These are the surface marks of Alexanderplatz. But, moving in and out of the crowds of ordinary folk or quietly sitting in two or three cafés of their own, are the sinister but unobtrusive figures of the gangsters of Berlin. For Alexanderplatz is on the edge of the crooks' quarter; and in the streets off the restless cluttered Münzstrasse, with its garish shops and bars and little cinemas and dingy come-and-go hotels—in that rather sinister maze of streets between the Prenzlauer Tor and the Hackesche Markt—swarm pimps and murderers and thieves. These, near and in the Alex, have their special cafés where they sit and murmur enigmatically and receive their tribute from the girls who walk the West End and sell themselves to spare their men the need for honest work.

The chief characters of the novel *Alexanderplatz* belong to this underworld; and the book's lurid but moving story is a story of gangsters' vileness, of prostitutes' fidelity and of the terrible things which befall one Franz Biberkopf, a man who has been in gaol for causing the death of a girl, who comes out of gaol bemused with fate, anxious to live straight in future, naive, credulous and penniless. He tries his hand at this job and that, resists the lure of Communism, works harder, begins to make good. Then he is cheated by a man he thought his friend, and his simple faith in his new life has its first rude shock. He drifts to a crook café on the Alex, falls in with Reinhold (surely the coldest-hearted and most loathsome villain in post-war fiction?), is once again deceived by smooth-tongued scoundrelism, joins a gang in a night burglary, realises he is to be their dupe, revolts, is thrown from a car by Reinhold and left for dead, struggles to health again but finds himself one-armed.

There follow a few months during which Biberkopf seems likely, with the help of a rival gang, to get his revenge on his betrayers. But Reinhold is in hiding and the others scattered. Franz slips lower in the scale of social decency, but finds his first real happiness with the girl Mieze, a delicate and charming figure, a flower of the streets. They live a brief idyll, which is the more moving in that it develops from an ordinary relationship of pimp and prostitute. Then Reinhold reappears. At first ignorant of the girl's connection with Biberkopf, he casts on her prettiness his cold but lustful eye. She evades him and he discovers who her protector is. Combined fear and jealousy of a man he once tried to murder decide Reinhold simultaneously to satisfy his desire for Mieze and to crush her lover. The unhappy girl is hideously sacrificed; her killer vanishes; and suspicion falls naturally on Franz, who is known to have lived with her and known also to have done to death one girl already and been in gaol for it.

In the end the hateful Reinhold gets some part of his deserts, and Biberkopf, after passing through the valley of the shadow and lying for weeks in a hospital asylum, achieves some measure of serenity. But he is no longer the same man. The girl who loved and slaved for him is dead; his faith in human nature is shattered; his mind is weak, his memory gone. We leave him —a creature without past or future, a sort of disembodiment of his former self—earning a humble living as a janitor, moving indifferently amid the jostle and noise and soulless scramble of the Alex.

It would be absurd to pretend that so rapid a summary as this conveys the fundamental quality of Döblin's amazing novel. No review, unless it quoted passage after passage, could present the breathlessness of style, the mixture of sly humour, simplicity, poignancy and force, with which is told the story of Biberkopf, with which around and about him is set flickering the kaleidoscope of the capital of defeated Germany. Döblin's technique has been compared to that of Joyce's *Ulysses*, but it is finer-textured, more resilient and not so harshly insolent. He runs sentences straight on, passing from a few words of narrative to a list of the stopping places on a passing tram, to mottoes on an automatic fortune-teller, to a tailor's placard, to extracts from the telephone book, to insurance advertisements, to all and any manifestation of the clamorous complexity of a huge commercial city. He breaks off to apostrophise the reader; he repeats words and phrases; he throws in a few lines of rhyme to coax a smile or change the rhythm of the reader's mind; he is demure, violent, pedantic, impressionist, frenzied, serene. There never was a book at once so tempestuous and so controlled; never a portrait of a metropolis so bewildering yet so obviously true. *Alexanderplatz* presents the soul of Biberkopf, the soul of the unhappy Mieze, the souls of souteneurs and criminals and paper-sellers and prostitutes—but above all the soul of post-war Berlin. This last is the revelation most sorely needed in Great Britain. If we come to know Döblin's Berlin, we are half way to knowing Germany. Then perhaps more of us will realise the demoralisation, anguish and despair which ten years of starvation, civil war, inflation, French nationalism and British weakness, have produced in Germany; more of us will ask (and ever more insistently) what is going to happen there, if the strain—the economic, the social, but most important of all, the spiritual strain—is not quickly and finally removed.

MICHAEL SADLEIR.

THE MAKING OF EGYPT

The Founder of Modern Egypt. By HENRY DODWELL. Cambridge University Press. 15s.

The founder of Modern Egypt, Mehemet Ali, was born in the *annus mirabilis* 1769, which gave Napoleon, Wellington, and Castlereagh to the world. He lived nearly as long as the old Duke, and, though he fell into senile decay in the last year or two of his life, his energy, imagination, will power and daring lasted into the forties and made him a fitting peer of the others. He was a tobacco merchant of Kavala who took up soldiering through a family connection. He married a rich wife who bore him the first of his ninety-five children and he eventually went to Egypt with an Albanian force in the troublous time which succeeded Bonaparte's unsuccessful expedition. His rise from a petty commander to the control of Egypt as Pasha of the decadent Sultan, which is one of the best examples in history of the success of Machiavellian policy, culminated in the treacherous and successful massacre of the Mamelukes and left him in undisputed possession of the Nile basin.

There Mehemet erected a wonderful fabric of power, and, though his larger ambitions were unwise and impossible, the kernal of it is the Egypt of to-day where his name is still held in veneration. The brutal methods which he applied to the fellaheen gave them a better lot than the anarchy which he succeeded. By cruel and capricious methods of conscription he made an army, he acquired and built a fleet, he even tried to industrialise Egypt. Egypt became much stronger than the loose Arab communities over which the Sultan still exercised his demoralising sway and Mehemet began to bring them under his rule one after another. The holy Places were secured first and the Caliph was no longer prayed for in Mecca and Medina; Syria and Palestine were wrested from the Sultan; Mehemet's power crept along the Red Sea. Might not, as his son Ibrahim, the leader of his armies, imagined, an Arab national state be brought into being stretching to the Persian Gulf?

Mehemet himself had no illusions about the impossibility of this task. The Arabs had no common bond but language. It was the inheritance of the Sultan at which Mehemet aimed. He would revive and reform Islam. But this object was just as impossible for it conflicted with the policies of the European

Powers and above all of Great Britain. In vain did Mehemet again and again try to win the friendship and countenance of England for his ambitious schemes. Why would not she accept him as the successor of the Sultan and the guardian of Constantinople and the route to India? "With the English for my friends I can do anything," he cried one day, "without their friendship I can do nothing." But Palmerston cared nothing for the friendship thus offered. He preferred to bolster up the Porte against Russia and Mehemet alike, and with skill and energy and luck brought his policy to a triumphant conclusion. At the end, only Egypt was left of all the Pasha's conquests, and Mehemet's successors impaired the founder's work to such an extent that the power whose assistance Mehemet had so desired took over a bankrupt state to protect her own interests.

Curiously enough, there was no adequate account of this dramatic career until after the war. More recently there has been a crop of books and studies by French, American and at last Egyptian writers. There has perhaps been a tendency to exaggerate unduly the achievements of Mehemet. Professor Dodwell's concise and clear account, besides marshalling new evidence from British and Egyptian archives, judges Mehemet by standards learnt from his Indian studies. He refuses to be shocked by tyranny, massacre or corruption, analyses the administrative successes and distributes praise and blame with an impartial hand. The quotation of Mehemet which he places on his title page "Je n'ai fait en Égypte que ce que les Anglais ont fait aux Indes," shows the spirit in which he has approached his problems. He has crammed the whole story into 276 pages, and, as there is neither a map (much needed), nor illustration, the book should have a lower price.

C. K. WEBSTER.

MARIA EDGEWORTH

Maria Edgeworth: Chosen Letters. Edited with an Introduction by F. V. BARRY. Cape. 12s. 6d.

The Most Unfortunate Day of My Life, and Other Stories. By MARIA EDGEWORTH. Cobden-Sanderson. 4s. 6d.

The frontispiece to Mr. Augustus Hare's *Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth* shows a pensive lady with one elbow resting on her works; just as a proud authoress might be thought to pose. But Maria had spoilt it all long since by inscribing impishly, "Oh, said the little woman, this is none of I!" Anyone who glances through her letters may see at once how alien the portrait is, how typical the comment. The little woman seems never to grow up or lose her sparkling and immediate zest for life. There is a better picture by Edward FitzGerald of "the great Maria" at seventy-two, "as busy as a bee . . . and chattering away. She is as lively, active and cheerful as if she were but twenty." Judging by her letters, almost more so. Through all her eighty years one can detect no sign of age and weariness, no failing grip. Irish adventures of the 1798 Rebellion are no more graphically told than those in the bogs of Connemara in 1834. They are both good stories, and Maria, in Ireland, France or England, lets her pen go chattering away on these good stories—hers or other people's—throwing in bright portraits with a careless prodigality most unsuitable to the authoress with an elbow on her works.

"Prony says that Buonaparte. . . ." "A charming anecdote of Madame de Staël." Benjamin Constant, "a fair, *whithky*-looking man . . . looks over the top of his spectacles, *squinching* up his eyes so that you cannot see your way into his mind." "Madame la Maréchale de Moreau, a battered beauty, smelling of garlic, and screeching in vain to pass for a wit." Or, in a flash of keen reflection, "*Vive l'enthousiasme!* Without it characters may be very snug and comfortable in the world, but there is a degree of happiness which they will never taste, and of which they have no more idea than an oyster can have."

This is the quality Maria Edgeworth possesses, though it is rare for her to analyse it thus. As a rule she displays it simply, until "Luckily a hair in my pen stopped me, or I might have gone on to another page." There is enthusiasm over Scott's books and his country, over travels, new sensations, friends. One mood and temper governs all her letters; there are no cross currents, sudden depths, or wonderings, and, amongst innumerable swift surprises, no surprise. In explanation one may consider first her correspondents. They are members of the family—her third stepmother, her dear Aunt Ruxton, cousins, brothers and sisters young when she was old. She told them all the gossip that would interest them; amongst relatives the deeper notes are barred.

But did they exist? The novels contain fun and observation, and the same unquestioning certainty as the letters display. Maria was submerged in family. There is no escaping Richard Lovell Edgeworth, whose four marriages produced this endless straggle of children—children young enough for Maria's moral tales. If Maria was tyrannised over by her father, it was willingly; his educational and ethical views were in her bones, though she could put the light touch on his ponderousness. "He may have great talents," she writes of Byron, "but I am sure he has neither a great nor good mind; and I feel dislike and disgust for his Lordship." When you are sure about morality, life runs easily, as far as spiritual disturbances are concerned. Maria is delightful for her objectivity; had she possessed less joy in her detachment, less shrewd observation, she might have been termed placid. Thanks to her father's so determined influence, she was never called upon to question life. She saw grim aspects of it during the rebellion; and the experience added to, did not numb, her vividness.

Of the letters here collected, many are familiar, most of them coming from the memoir by the fourth Mrs. Edgeworth, privately printed in 1867, on which Mr. Hare's *Life and Letters* was based. A few are published here for the first time. Where choice is necessary it is useless to quarrel with an editor over his selections; but one is sorry to miss the account of the "huge, bang-up-coated, self-sufficient bear of an English agent," who flopped down in the coach from Armagh "without the least pretence of care for the female," nearly extinguishing the tiny authoress. This gentleman was to be in her books if she had written further Irish ones. While arranging the letters for the most part chronologically, Mr. Barry has had the sly idea of grouping together a number written on literary subjects in middle and late years. Sly, because, with one or two exceptions, the letters are not "literary" at all. Brief references to Jane Austen, eulogies of Scott, records of a layman's pleasure. They hint that if Miss Edgeworth had not happened to write stories she would have voted books down willingly, in favour of enthusiastic life.

Here, however, is a story, fit to rank with Rosamund, that warns us terribly against *diffuse* enthusiasm. The MS., found recently in an old house in Ireland, was bound carefully in scarlet leather, as befits its motto: "Finish crowns the Work." Now we have Maria in neat moral mood. Young Robert, bursting with ideas for mother's birthday present, turns untidily from each plan to the next. Arthur, his brother's righteous foil, who sticks to drawing, provides a further lesson by losing his temper over asses' legs. Scissors are thrown—Mamma is jabbed—repentance. All the typical touches, homely, vivid and homiletic, have a place in it. The blithe flourish of Miss Norah McGuiness's drawings might perplex the authoress no less than did that pensive portrait. Truly, they suit the little woman, but are too airy for Robert, who reforms.

THE BEHAVIOUR OF GOLD

The International Gold Problem. A Record of the Discussions of a Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1929–1931. Oxford University Press. 12s. 6d.

Towards the end of the year 1929 a group of highly distinguished economists and financiers began meeting together to study the gold problem under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. For two years they read one another papers, talked to one another, and wrote one another memoranda; and now we are given a selection of what they wrote and said in volume form. The result is at once highly interesting and instructive in detail, and singularly inconclusive as a guide to policy. For the fundamental facts that emerge from so much expenditure of effort are, first, that there is no common measure of agreement about the actual influence of gold on prices, and secondly, that there is none about the price policy the world ought to promote, if it had the necessary knowledge.

There is, to begin with, no agreement on the question how far the shortage or maldistribution of gold has been responsible for

the falling prices of recent years, either before or after the world slump. The reader gets the impression that the group began by attributing the price-fall mainly to gold, but became more and more doubtful about this as its discussions proceeded side by side with the intensification of the world depression. There was too, towards the close, a tendency to talk less about shortage, and more about maldistribution; but there was above all a growing consciousness of the importance of other factors, quite distinct from gold, in causing the level of prices to fall. And there arose, accordingly, a growing scepticism about purely monetary remedies for the world slump.

Nor was there any measure of agreement about the course which it is desirable for prices to take. Mr. Robertson, and a number of other economists, wanted a falling price-level, as world productivity advanced, preferring that the advantages of rising production should be taken out in lower prices rather than in higher money incomes. But there was strong opposition to this view from those who held that a falling price-level almost inevitably causes business depression, and thus tends to lower actual production even if productive capacity is increasing. The duel between these two schools of thought never ended: each group remained of its own opinion to the last.

A most interesting point, which arose again and again, but was never thoroughly pursued, was that, whereas under the gold standard the world is tied largely to a common monetary policy, in reality different monetary policies suit different countries—especially those in which productivity is advancing at very different rates. This is, indeed, the most fundamental of all questions relating to monetary policy; for if countries have widely differing monetary riches, may not the entire attempt to bind the whole world together into a common financial system by means of gold rest on a mistake? Perhaps, if the group goes on with its work, it will try to get down to this really critical question which is of the greatest immediate importance now that so many countries are again off the gold standard.

Inconclusive as this volume is, it is packed with informative and suggestive argument and it is the more valuable because it gives us a number of leading economists and financiers talking one to another much more freely than such persons usually write or talk for public consumption. Certainly there have been no more stimulating discussions of the gold problem for a long time past.

LONDON WORK AND WORKERS

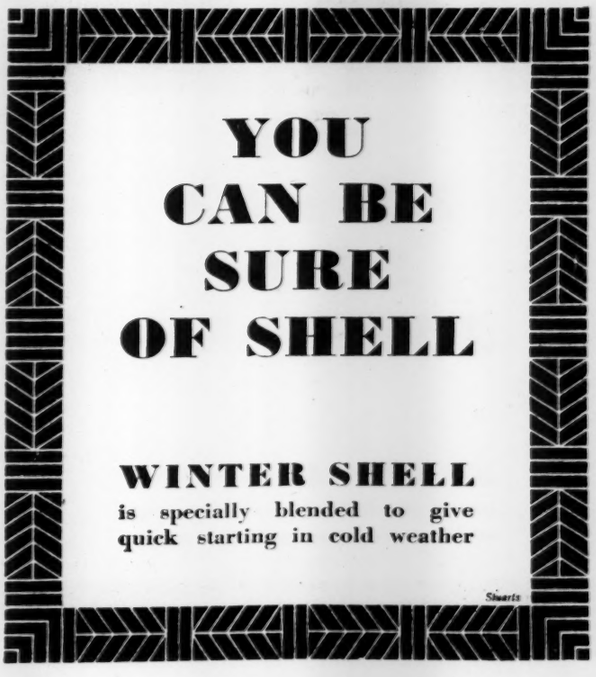
The New Survey of London Life and Labour. Vol. II. Edited by SIR HUBERT LLEWELYN SMITH. King. 17s. 6d.

The interest, one might say the fascination, of the immense *New Survey of London Life and Labour* increases. Sir Hubert Llewelyn Smith and his co-workers are rendering an invaluable service to their time. In their second volume, an instalment of the industrial section of the survey, they deal with London work and workers in a number of penetrating studies of leading London trades. The studies are preceded by a swift-moving introduction in which the director is illuminating in many comments and inferences. The book is easy to read and should be inspiriting especially to the reformer and the politician. As the highest praise one can apply to it, one may say that it is adequate to the greatness of its theme.

Its theme is, of course, the condition of London industry and the London wage-earner as compared with their condition in the time of the great pioneer survey of Charles Booth. The revelations of Booth's survey were gloomy. Well-paid workmen were few forty years ago. The sweat shops flourished in trades like furniture and clothing. Casual labour in many industries, but especially at the docks, was an open sore. Women workers earned a pittance. Hours of labour were protracted. For some years of his life the relatively well-to-do workmen fell below the poverty line. Now the romantic and thrilling demonstration of the New Survey is that this scene is changed. The poverty-stricken multitudes of the Booth enquiry are no more. The docker, as well as the victims of the sweater, have found a new way of life. Hours of labour have become humane. In the background of the picture, not, however, dealt with in this volume, are the life-giving social services. The conditions deplored by Booth, or most of them, are transformed.

The change is the outcome of many causes. There is education in it and democratic stir and the legislation to which these have led. There is Trade Unionism in it. In the section dealing with labour at the Docks, the Transport Workers' Union is praised, as it deserves, for its part in the most dramatic act of social redemption in our time. The unorganised docker lived chancily. When rejected at the "call on" he relapsed into the public house to find a shelter and beer at a penny a glass. In the time of Booth the dockers were largely a homeless community. They "pigged it" in lodging houses at 3d. a night or slept in the streets. To-day all is different and better. The dockers are organised and as such are entitled to Trade Union rates, the amount of which, in fact, they often exceed (the author of the article on Dock Labour found that the earnings of a sample group of wharf labourers averaged 15s. 10d. per day, 3s. 10d. in excess of the Trade Union minimum). Moreover, the docker has a home and (what some of the older dockers think surprising) spends much of his leisure time in it! Even the element of casualisation is no longer intractable. The registration of port workers has closed the riverside to the classes which in Booth's time inundated it. The writer already mentioned finds that 46 per cent. of registered port workers are to-day fully employed, 16 per cent. are employed more than five days a week, 15 per cent. four days, 13 per cent. three days. The influence of the Union is not merely over wages and the regularisation of labour. It permeates all the avenues of employment. The Union stands behind the docker safeguarding his health, stiffening his morale, lifting up his spirit.

If the docker has been the subject of one of the great reclamations of which this volume treats, the sweated worker has been the subject of the other. Not a Trade Union is entitled to credit in this case, but an Act of Parliament in the making of which Sir Hubert Smith, then Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade, played a distinguished part. Mr. R. H. Tawney has expressed the deliberate opinion that the Trade Boards Acts constitute the greatest industrial reform of our age and those who read the second volume of the Survey will find many reasons for agreeing with him. The trades to which the Acts are applied are trades in which in the main the workers are women and girls. These women and girls, once the most poorly remunerated of all workers, are now level with or ahead of women in other trades, which at the same time have felt the influence of Trade Board standards. Their rates of wages are double, in some cases they are treble the pre-war rates. Those who remember the women workers of the clothing trades, as they existed more than twenty years ago, will remember women of whom many or most were ragged, under-nourished and spiritless drudges, having nothing in common with the well-dressed and self-reliant clothing workers of whom the volume tells us to-day. The alteration is fundamental. The improvement of the income of the family is a more



important social fact than the improvement of the income of any single community of wage earners; improvement in the family income, as may be seen from this volume, is traceable largely to the higher earnings of women, effected, directly or indirectly, by the Trade Boards Acts.

Other stories less pleasant than that of the docker and the sweated worker are outlined in these important pages. One is that of the craftsman who has no longer "all his desire in the work of his craft." The craftsman, Sir Hubert Smith seems to say, is doomed. For mechanics whose skill is of the highest there is an increasing demand. But among the crowds of lesser men and of women who now feed, or carry away from, or mind the machine, these super-skilled are few. There is genuine tragedy here: in the case, for example, of the wood worker once near to an artist who "planed" and "morticed" and "tenonned" to his own deep delight and is now degraded to "assembling" and "finishing": "women's work," as the writer has heard these humiliated workers say in derision and bitterness. The machine opens the door to unskilled men and women and increasing numbers of boys and girls. It brings piece-rates which may yield more than the time rates and to which the worker transfers some of the interest which formerly he was able to feel in his job. To these tendencies only the building trade offers effective resistance: the building trade in which craftsman and the time rate exist in holy purity and the modern abominations are held at bay. What a pity that the cost of building is so high!

One puts down the volume, which is far too full of information to lend itself to effective review, with a feeling that London is lucky. Unlike the industrial areas of Wales and the far North it has escaped the wastage of excessive unemployment, and the wages of its sheltered trades have not felt the icy winds of competition that blow upon many wages elsewhere. The thought of this good fortune is a cure for complacency.

J. J. MALLON.

DRINK AND EFFICIENCY

The Social and Economic Aspects of the Drink Problem. Gollancz. 5s.

This is a companion volume to the *Review of the Effect of Alcohol on Man*, published earlier in the present year. That book embodied the conclusions of a medical committee appointed a few years ago to investigate the physiological and hygienic relations of alcoholic beverages and man. The present work is the report of the social and economic committee, among whose members were Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree, Professor Carr-Saunders, and Professor A. L. Bowley, appointed at the same time. Its compilers have aimed at making their report a storehouse of information, rather than a medium for reconstructive proposals. Their general attitude is scientific and impartial, and their conclusions seem to be the logical outcome of the evidence. Taken as a whole, these conclusions are reassuring.

It is unnecessary to reiterate the statistics which illustrate the obvious fact that there is far less drinking to-day than there was before the war; but it is surprising to find that, in spite of these very great diminution in the amount of alcohol consumed, the average proportion of income spent on drink is, owing to the effect of heavy taxation on prices, almost the same as in 1913. "The poverty-creating effect of drink is therefore little, if any, less than it was." Surely, it was its "poverty-creating effect" which those who favour its heavy taxation used to put forward as the greatest evil of drink. Such heavy drinking as persists is to be found mostly among those living in crowded homes, and engaged in unskilled work.

The reduction in drinking is, of course, in large part attributable to the higher price of liquor, and in part to low earnings and unemployment. But the committee is of opinion that a renewal of national prosperity and an increased spending power, though they would probably lead for a time to increased consumption, would not cause a return to anything resembling pre-war drinking habits. The younger people are everywhere reported as finding alternative methods of recreation far more powerful attraction than that exercised by the public-house. Convention is a big factor in this problem as in most other social problems. It is noteworthy that in those industries that have been little affected by trade depression, in which earnings have remained relatively high, the decrease in drinking has been at least as great as in the more depressed trades in which economic compulsion might be thought to afford an adequate explanation. It is significant that there is no evidence of any widespread demand from the rising generation for the abolition of the present restrictions on the sale of liquor, and the committee reports that everything points to the tendency of increased leisure to "foster interest in newer forms of enjoyment"; whereas, "when leisure was restricted the inducement was to spend it in the public-house."

Most of the employers and managers whose opinions are quoted rejoice, on economic and industrial grounds, at the improved sobriety of their "hands." But there are a few entertaining exceptions. A blast furnace manager at Middlesbrough, for instance, thought that the beer-drinker was the better worker, and suggested that discontent among the men was due to inability to afford drink, "with the result that they stand at street-corners and grouse." "He could not believe the lessened drinking was due to better education or improved habits. In his view, education lessened industrial peace; and men were more interested in their work when the hours at the furnace were longer." A firm of manufacturing chemists in the same town stated that in their business heavy drinkers often proved most energetic workers. "In the soda furnaces, for instance, the men are without exception, we think, heavy drinkers; but they do their work well, and are not often absent through illness, and they all seem to live to a good old age." An ore mine manager, a member of the County Council, expressed a similar view in more violent terms. "Ninety per cent. of the time lost through neglect," he is reported as saying, "is caused by the self-advertising abstainers and religious enthusiasts." These, however, are but eccentricities.

The chief impression which remains on the mind after reading this book is that, from the human point of view, the drink problem in this country is no longer an outstanding one; and that, by the provision of decent homes and a progressive development of those amenities which have already produced so great a result, we could abolish the problem altogether.

HARRY ROBERTS.

? ?

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Our announcement of Notable British Trials in the issue of *The New Statesman and Nation* of December 12th, inadvertently included the title "James Stuart."

We wish to point out that this of course was a typographical error and should have read "James Stewart," and we trust that no inconvenience has been caused.

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SHORTER NOTICES

Notes and Memories of a Sports Reporter. By E. H. LACON WATSON. Herbert Joseph. 12s. 6d.

Here is a record of sport during the years of change, when on every hand it has been specialised and professionalised. Mr. Lacon Watson, however, though he moralises at times, is mainly the recorder of sport as he has known it from 1878 when he went to Winchester to the present day; and as he has known it intimately and written of it with knowledge, the story he has to tell is remarkably complete, and it is told moreover with the charm of a practised essayist. Mr. Watson makes it clear enough that for all the "progress" there has been, the past lingers agreeably in his memory. He rode his high bicycle till it became ridiculous, but not to him. The essays on Wimbledon old and new are perhaps the best things in a book that teems with good things: on other games than lawn tennis—read especially the account of Jessop to the rescue in the 1902 Test, on billiards and golf, on boat-racing and deer-stalking, on football, the Olympic games, and real tennis.

The Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages. By the RT. REV. MONSIGNOR HORACE K. MANN, D.D. Vol. XVII. Kegan Paul. 15s.

This volume, like its sixteen predecessors, is a careful and scholarly compilation based on the study of the available printed material and written from an orthodox Catholic standpoint. It covers the six years of the pontificates of Nicholas IV and Celestine V and so brings a record which began with A.D. 590 down to 1294. It includes an account of the missionary enterprises promoted by Nicholas IV to Persia, China and Ethiopia; and thus leads Monsignor Mann to go with his usual thoroughness into such records as are accessible of the previous history of Christianity in those countries. Neither Nicholas nor Celestine escape criticism for their shortcomings as men of affairs: Nicholas, we are told, was narrow, dilatory and partial, and in the neighbourhood of Rome he rather aggravated than diminished the disorder of the country by his ignorance of the most elementary ideas of government; and Celestine, however fully he may have earned his canonisation, is an illustration of the fact that neither one's own prayers nor those of others will make up for want of training; his decision to resign after five months of sad blundering was undoubtedly in the best interests of the Church.

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Makers of Chemistry. By E. J. HOLMWOOD. Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Holmwood traces the development of chemistry from its beginnings in the technology of metal working. The union of the practical knowledge so obtained with the speculations of Aristotle and the Alexandrian philosophers produced the pseudo-science of alchemy, which finally perished in a welter of transcendental fantasy. With the discovery and investigation of gases and the development of the Atomic Theory chemistry was reborn. While the common comparison between the ideas of the alchemists and the modern theories of the nature of matter is in many ways misleading it is at least suggestive to notice the strong traces of Neo-Platonic Idealism in the work of Professors Jeans and Eddington. As a popular account of the development of chemistry, this book is really excellent, but it would have been interesting to have had some information about the chemical discoveries of early mediæval medicine, especially of the great school of Salerno.

About Motoring

FOG

THE trouble with fog is that it is intermittent rather than continuous, local rather than national, and seasonal rather than endemic. Consequently neither our road authorities nor our automobile engineers take any special steps to cope with it. When a man has elected to reside in a district which is not over-blessed with public transport services, and has spent several hundred pounds on a car to fill the gaps in the local railway and bus programmes, he is rather annoyed to discover that fog can torpedo his engagements for a whole week. The technical experts who are concerned with flying display a very different spirit. A small local fog, if it chances to attack the neighbourhood of an aerodrome, can paralyse aerial transport completely. That might be tolerated, but there is the added risk that fog may rise suddenly, and that a plane may crash. Such a crash will not only take its toll of human life, but will prejudice the public mind against aviation in general. Consequently aero engineers are grappling very vigorously with their particular fog problems, and if they are not yet solved it is probable that solution is not very far away. By chance during the 1930-31 winter I was testing a new radio set, and tuned in the wavelength used by Croydon and the aircraft. I stumbled into the control engineer's efforts to steer an aeroplane into Croydon. The pilot was flying blind. He had very little notion where he was, and dared not lose altitude for fear of colliding with some hill or house. But the control engineers knew precisely where he was, and they eventually steered him home and got him down safely. The dangers and difficulties of flying in fog are plainly far more serious than those of driving a motor vehicle on the road in similar conditions, and the latter can be solved if the public decide that they must be solved. This is not the time to spend public money for such purposes, but the matter must nevertheless be ventilated. If we form our impressions of fog on the roads from the columns of the daily press, we shall be grossly deceived. There are very few nights and still fewer days in an average British winter when road traffic is completely paralysed by fog, and drivers maroon their cars on the turf by the roadside, and find their way in despair to the nearest railway station. But there are a great many nights and a number of days when road traffic is enormously delayed and endangered. The delay and the increased danger are alike largely unnecessary. Both are expensive. Road traffic no longer consists exclusively or even mainly of rich idlers indulging in a pleasant hobby. The night traffic, especially in winter, is mostly utilitarian traffic, and many vehicles are laden with perishable food supplies. Already this winter I have seen long streams of commercial vehicles groping their way along at a mere crawl; and on no such occasion has the road under observation escaped accidents due exclusively to the fog. It is time that definite experimental work was undertaken to simplify, safeguard and accelerate fog-driving, and that better application was made of such small knowledge as we already possess. Invention might be stimulated if some public body offered really substantial prizes for suggestions and designs. As the problem is national the Ministry of Transport might well take a lead. If they are not sufficiently enterprising, there are several associations of traders, engineers and amateur motorists with surplus funds which could hardly be more wisely spent.

As far as present information goes, special equipment concerns both the vehicle and roads. There are a very few vehicles in

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general use which career along fairly happily in the kind of moderate fog which reduces the average car to a miserable and anxious crawl. Some of them are motor coaches, others are private cars; the latter are, I think, invariably of foreign manufacture, or are supplied with foreign equipment. Fog is common enough on the lowlands in England, but it is far more prevalent in Holland and certain parts of Belgium, so that some Continental engineers take it more seriously. There are a number of special lamps which double, treble, or even quadruple the maximum safe speed in certain types of fog. Some Minerva cars, for example, can maintain twenty miles an hour in a mist which reduces a standard British or American car to a speed of five miles an hour. Some of our public service motor coaches carry a special fog lamp, which was designed by one of their own drivers, vainly hawked round the English car factories and lamp makers, and eventually sold to a foreign firm. The motor coach driver possibly benefits from the fact that he is seated high up above his lamps and on a level with them, instead of low down and a yard or two behind his sources of illumination. All these aspects demand enquiry, and it might be proved that in a fog the driver should be seated close to the near side of the road. It is beyond question that in fog the windscreen should open far enough to give the driver direct vision, instead of vision through fouled glass. Some windscreens on standard British cars cannot be opened far enough to supply such vision; and on others the drivers can just see under the glass if he crouches.

Since all drivers steer by the edge of the road in a fog unless they possess lamps with a moderate power of penetrating fog, the edge of the road should be designed to be as visible as possible. Many modern roads have concrete kerbs, originally adopted to resist the side thrust created by heavy traffic speeding on the crown of a heavily cambered roadway. If these kerbs were painted white, and the white paint was renewed each autumn, visibility in a fog would be vastly improved. This simple device does not go very far by itself. Every experienced driver can remember occasions when he was driving in a fog with a visibility of perhaps six feet range, and followed a hedge, wall, paling, kerb or other road edge down some side turning which he had no wish to take, but under conditions of limited visibility, and in the absence of all other landmarks, he thought the side turning was a continuation of the main road, so that he eventually lost his way completely. Such white kerbs should therefore be marked at intervals with a sign indicating the road, such as the letters and digits of the Ministry's road names, which could cheaply be painted in black, or might be indicated by the tiny red and green reflex lenses used for night warning signs. Side turns should be clearly marked in similar fashion. A great deal can be done with existing information and we have not yet begun to exploit the inventive brain in this sphere.

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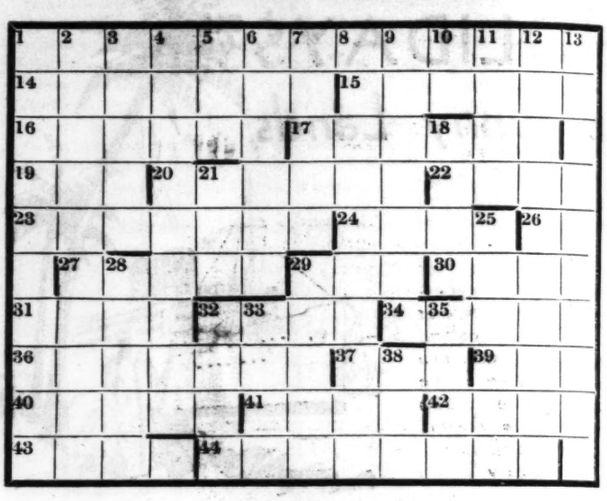

JOHNSONIAN.

ACROSS.

1. Hobbs, Nobbs, Stokes, and Nokes must have been concerned in my legislation.
14. The wrong sort of trust.
15. Make good with a communist's start.
16 *rev.* Some do this in their letters.
17. Kettledrum that suggests a college yell.
19. An expression of hatred turns its back on a common tongue.
20. Reverse for him who was once all but omnipotent.
22. There's rather more in this Saint.
23. Finding a mother younger than her son has been thus described.
24. The indifferent are specially contemptuous of a red one.
26. What Washington was to his country.
27. Elevating.
29 *rev.* Mitigated before 10 *dn.*
30 *rev.* Butter me up.
31. Scold me, scold my tax.
32 *rev.* There's lime about that never grew on trees.
34. Mine is a classic mystery.
36. Call me "car"ly (or is our clubman headless?).
37. Cologne is famed for me.
39. For catching sticklebacks.
40 *rev.* Almost serious.
41. Tide that waits for no man.
42. Might result from one on the "point."
43. Reverse of 41.
44. Tawdry, though I've lost my i.o.u.s.

DOWN.

1. Artist's process.
2. In such tones spoke the untamed Katherine to Petruchio.
3. Earl in the ascendant.
4. Provokes slumber, with us.
5. Imitate.
6. Course of course.
7. Cut upwards.
8. Natural environment of the strawberry (according to Shakespeare).
9. You'd still have me if they removed your aneroids.
10. See 29 *across.*
11. You're a host in yourself, mate.
12. Such communications often corrupt good manners.
13. Hard and green.
18. Something towards a skeleton in the cupboard.
21. Too backward for me.
25. Lyrical if thoroughly confused.
28, 32. Printer's idea of emphasis.
29. A delusion makes you less deluded.
32. See 28.
33. What the countryside provides for her lovers.
35. Scene of a post-war tragedy.
38. The Saint becomes fit.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS.—2. Pollux. 7. Hans (Andersen). 11. It. 13. walrus. 15. (R)omeo. 16. wow. 17. Eric. 18. pussycat. 20. not ice *rev.* 23. air. 24. alse. 25. Hengist. 26. Dulac *rev.* 28. (ai)led. 29. Alva *rev.* 30. ha(il) *rev.* 32. owl. 33. dip(tera). 35. gait. 36. sowle. 38. door. 40. (ha)il. 41. ai(led). 42. triad. 43. Swan. 44. voo(doo). 46. osnoe (noose). 47. calm *rec.* 48. tern. 49. Edgar *rev.*

DOWN.—1. Tweedledum. 2. parched. 3. (s)oli(d). 4, 5. lupus. 6. sox *rev.* 7. hesitation. 8. amyr (Mary). 9. (i)con. 10. swallowing. 11. iota. 12. Tweedledee. 14. carpenter *rev.* 19. univalve. 21. dei *rev.* 22. ago *rev.* 23. Ailsa *rev.* 24. A.A. 26. Castor. 27. Wu *rev.* 31. Horsa. 34. Iowa. 35. gin. 37. laod (load), 39. Osl(o). 45. or.

LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE.

The final averages of the two bowlers are:

Smith: 15 wickets for 60.

Jones: 20 wickets for 80.

I have pleasure in acknowledging a number of correct solutions.

THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE

Two cyclists, John and George, start simultaneously from two points, A and B, 60 miles apart, to cycle towards one another along a straight road. John goes at 10 m.p.h. and George at 15 m.p.h. A fly, travelling at 20 m.p.h., leaves point A at the same time as John, and flies along the road till he meets George; when he turns about and flies back again to John. He proceeds thus to fly back and forth until the two cyclists meet. What distance has the fly then covered?

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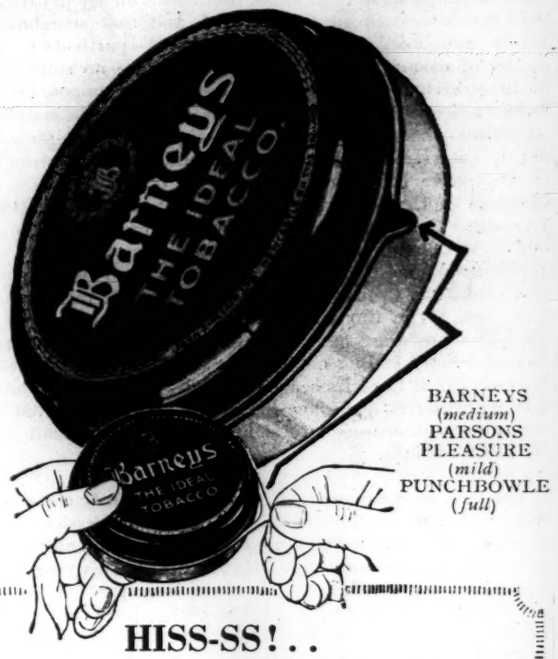

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR.

THE RECOVERY IN THE POUND—THE CUNARD CASE—P. AND O. ACCOUNTS—NATIONAL CANNING

THE comity of nations has now reached the stage when each country hopes to profit out of the misfortunes of its trade rivals, but no one expects any real good. This is deplorable, but the human race, being naturally stupid, only learns by suffering. Lancashire, for example, has been profiting from the Chinese boycott of Japanese goods and from the depreciation in sterling. That this would drive Japan off the gold standard sooner or later was the general expectation. Now that the new Japanese Government has taken the plunge (which is greatly alarming Lancashire), suspicion is being cast at some of the remaining gold standard countries. The South African agricultural and pastoral industries are slowly being ruined because the Nationalist Party hates Great Britain so heartily that it will not abandon gold for sterling. The Dutch East Indies can hardly stay on gold much longer, whatever Holland may say. Belgium will probably desert the standard as soon as Great Britain imposes a stiff tariff on iron and steel. Germany, not being allowed to renounce gold, is pursuing the only alternative course—a drastic reduction of the internal price level, but as it is easier to reduce wages than retail prices, she is doing her best to encourage local Bolshevism. Meanwhile, the economic isolation of America and France develops apace. The pound has been profiting from these fears and suspicions, and the "bears" of sterling have been closing their commitments. Whether the French authorities have been selling dollars to put sterling better so that the Bank of France may begin to liquidate part of its £62,000,000 of sterling balances, I do not know, but an unexpected source of support to the sterling exchanges has been the Indian gold movement. Gold is being released by the Indian hoarders attracted by the gold premium. Gold articles of every description find their way into the local banks who ship to London and instruct their agents to sell forward the proceeds, whether dollars, francs or guilders. If the Indian gold movement develops—£20,000,000 has been shipped since September and the total hoard in India is enormous—it may help to support the sterling exchanges at a very critical period.

* * *

Feelings run high over the suspension of the work on the giant Cunard liner. Both the Government and the City are being blamed for allowing such a tragedy to happen. This monster was the pride of Great Britain and it is regarded as disgraceful that such a minor episode in British history as a world trade slump, even if accompanied by a European banking crisis, should be permitted to interfere with the national plans for wresting the "blue riband" of the Atlantic from the Germans, who cannot even pay their debts. The money market and the banks are blamed for getting themselves frozen up with German bills and then refusing to discount the "100 per cent. British" bills of the Cunard Steamship Company. The Government is condemned for failing to give financial help to the Cunard while generously allowing debts owing to it by the Royal Mail group to remain unpaid, thus enabling the Royal Mail voting trustees to turn up their noses at the Cunard offer for the White Star Atlantic fleet. There is a good deal of truth in these accusations. The Cunard, has explained that this year it will earn just sufficient to meet expenses, debenture interest and half the preference share dividends, but nothing to cover the amount, estimated at £675,000, which should be set aside to provide for normal depreciation on the fleet. The Company was largely financing the construction of the new ship by bills which were being met out of these depreciation earnings. The banks may be "correct" in refusing to accept Cunard bills if the depreciation earnings are non-existent, but there is no doubt that they would be more accommodating if they were not heavily involved in the German financial mess. There should, of course, be no Government support for private shipping companies without adequate safeguards or control, but as the Government has been indirectly, if not directly, helping the Royal Mail, I expect it will find a way to do something for the more deserving Cunard.

* * *

Lord Inchcape may fairly be described as one of the last of the feudal ship-owners. His speech last week, which, in his absence, was read to the contented shareholders (I had almost written "contented serfs") of the P. & O., by one of the deputy-chairmen, reads like one of the Victorian episodes in *Cavalcade*, except where allusions to this dreadful world slump bring us back to the life-and-death problems of democracy. That Lord Inchcape should regard the P. & O. with patriarchal feelings is understandable, seeing that he is so largely responsible for its present greatness. Moreover, his son, Viscount Glenapp, is one of the Deputy-Chairmen and Managing Directors. And Lady Inchcape no doubt has her say about a ship's appearance, for his Lordship remarked: "Together with Lady Inchcape I spent some hours inspecting the *Viceroy of India* on the day of her sailing from Tilbury. We . . . utterly failed to find any fault. She appeared to us. . . ." This family pride is excusable, but Lord Inchcape should not forget that this is an age of democracy, that democracies must be educated, and that shareholders of public companies demand enlightenment—particularly in the matter of accounts. Politics and emotion are no substitute for business candour at a shareholders' meeting. I suppose that when Lord Inchcape declares that he does not view the trade future with dismay because "we have now, by the common-sense of our people, got a strong National Government, and Socialism and Communism have been given the boot," he really believes it. [The directors of the Cunard would probably hold different views.] I presume that when he looks forward "to peace and quiet in our beloved land, where all have the opportunity by brains, application, honesty, frugality and industry to rise to any position under the Crown," a successful, self-made man really feels like that. [The thousands who have been unemployed for a year or more must have other feelings, especially if they are feeling hungry.] But none of these things would have called for criticism if Lord Inchcape had really explained to the shareholders of the P. & O. how the profits had been arrived at and why their balance-sheet total had jumped from £26.7 millions to £40.1 millions.

* * *

The new accounts of the P. & O. are, curiously enough, much more informative than the old, but what a confession to make! I recall that the P. & O. at one time used to lump all their assets into one single item in their balance-sheet! This year there are more than a dozen items. The most important change is that debtors, cash and investments (less charges) are split up instead by being merged together as one item of £9,000,000 as in the previous year. The company apparently holds £6,679,200 of British Government stocks and £1,142,851 in other "outside" investments. A new item of £13,654,071 appears as "investments in subsidiary companies," and if this is compensated for by loans on the liabilities side, it explains why the balance-sheet total jumped from £26.7 millions to £40.1 millions. But the profit and loss account is just as confusing as in past years. The credit balance, "after providing for depreciation" of £917,802, is not divided, as it should be, between voyage results, dividends from liquid investments and dividends from subsidiary companies. If we assume a 5 per cent. return on the gilt-edged and other investments, income from outside the business would be responsible for over 40 per cent. of the total profit or over 90 per cent. of the net earnings of £428,237, after providing for debenture interest and redemption. And we have Lord Inchcape's cryptic remark that ability to pay the reduced dividend of 6 per cent. tax free (against 10 per cent.) was mainly due to "dividends from our outside investments and to the help we have received from some of our allies." Have the "allies" paid extra dividends to enable the P. & O. to pay 6 per cent. tax free? Or have they advanced the P. & O. some money? These are vital questions and the shareholders are plainly entitled to an explanation. It is no comfort for shareholders to be told that the 355 ships of the P. & O. group stand in the books "at £10,000,000 less than if they had been written down at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum on their original cost," if no ship to-day is really earning its depreciation.

* * *

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